

Saudi foreign minister plans trip to Jordan

AMMAN (Petra) — Saudi Foreign Minister Saud Al Faisal will arrive here at the beginning of June on an official visit to the Kingdom. Prince Faisal will meet with senior Jordanian officials to discuss the latest developments in the Middle East as well as bilateral relations.



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King receives Abu Marzouk

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Tuesday received at the Royal Court former head of Hamas politburo Musa Abu Marzouk and his wife. Mr. Abu Marzouk expressed gratitude and appreciation of the King's efforts with the U.S. administration that led to his release, and thanked the King for allowing him to take up residence in Jordan. He also lauded the King's efforts in defence of Arab rights. Attending the meeting was Royal Court Chief Awn Khasawneh and Parliament Deputy Bassam Emoush.

Jordan sends aid to Iranian earthquake victims

AMMAN (R) — A Jordanian relief plane loaded with tents, blankets, food and medicine flew to Tehran Tuesday to help victims of the earthquake in Iran, Jordan Press Agency, Petra reported. "The plane is carrying relief aid to Iranian people injured in the destructive earthquake," Petra said. Iran said Tuesday 1,560 were killed and 2,810 injured in Saturday's quake near its eastern border. A second earthquake, measuring 4.8 on the Richter scale, struck the same region Tuesday but there was no word on casualties.

Norway's foreign minister discusses Mideast peace in Syria

DAMASCUS (AP) — Syrian President Hafez Al Assad met Norway's foreign minister Tuesday on ways to resume the stalled Middle East peace process. Norwegian Foreign Minister Bjorn Tore Godal is on a tour of the region for talks with Arab and Israeli leaders. A presidential statement said Mr. Assad's talks with Mr. Godal focused on "the peace process and the obstacles placed by the Israeli government on its road that led to its freeze." After his meeting with Mr. Assad, Mr. Godal told reporters that he had "very useful" talks in Damascus. Mr. Godal left the Syrian capital for Jordan, the third leg of a Middle East tour that took him to Egypt and will take him to the Palestinian territories and Israel.

Ministers end dispute over Mideast reference

VALLETTA (R) — The European Union and Arab foreign ministers issued Tuesday the final statement of the Euro-Mediterranean Conference after nearly one month delay because of a dispute over the Middle East reference. The statement said the ministers "expressed their deep concern about the obstacles which are blocking the Middle East peace process. They stressed the need for a just, comprehensive and lasting settlement in the Middle East, within the framework of the peace process as agreed in Madrid in October 1991." A text circulated shortly before the end of the conference last month had deleted this reference, diluting the text in the eyes of the Arab states. The two-day conference of foreign ministers from 27 European and Mediterranean countries ended in Malta April 16 and hours of wrangling over the Middle East part prevented the issuing of the final declaration.

Government raises water prices on usage above limit

Private company to distribute water in Amman

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The government on Tuesday hiked water prices as of October 1 in a move that Water and Irrigation Minister Munther Haddadin said will not affect households that consume less than 50 cubic metres per season (three months).

"The government decision will affect mainly hospitals, hotels, shops, factories," Dr. Haddadin said adding that water for this group will be sold at JD 1 per cubic metre.

Households that consume more than 50 cubic metres of water every season will pay 850 piasters per metre, Dr. Haddadin said.

The minister said the decision would earn the treasury an extra JD 20 million a year and that the

extra money will be used to finance Water Authority projects.

The government decision follows a water agreement the Kingdom reached with Israel last Thursday to supply Jordan with 50 million cubic metres of water.

According to Dr. Haddadin, 25 to 30 million cubic metres will be pumped immediately and the remainder will come after three years.

Dr. Haddadin ruled out that the decision to raise the water prices was linked to the water agreement with Israel and was aimed at replacing the quantity that would come after three years by forcing people to reduce consumption.

"The decision was prompted only because of water scarcity and our desire to reduce water consumption in Jordan," Dr.

Haddadin said. The decision was also prompted by the high operational and maintenance cost of water pumping by the authority, which manages to cover only 82 per cent of the operation cost. The remaining 18 per cent of the cost is so far covered through borrowing from private and government institutions, Dr. Haddadin said.

The minister said that 55 per cent of water quantity pumped through the capital's old-age water pipe network is wasted because of "water leakage and the unqualified Water Authority manpower."

Dr. Haddadin said that the government has decided also to choose a local firm to distribute water in Amman on behalf of the Water Authority and to improve the water network system in Greater Amman region.

He said that the firm will maintain water and sewage networks in Amman.

Dr. Haddadin said that the private firm, which would be chosen through free competition, would be obligated to employ "half of the Water Authority staffs to make use of their experience." He added that the firm should start operation by October 1.

"If the authority was a private firm it would have been compelled by Jordanian laws to declare bankruptcy," the minister said, emphasising the lack of funds and inefficiency of water operations.

He said that the government has prepared a study to repair and renew the water network in Jordan with a total cost of \$300 million.

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Israel's ambassador to Jordan submits resignation after 4 days

There is no room for my service here — Eran

AMMAN (J.T.) — Only four days after taking office as Israel's ambassador to Jordan, Oded Eran resigned in protest of not being informed about the Aqaba meeting between His Majesty King Hussein and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu last Thursday, Israel Radio reported.

Israeli embassy spokesperson, Shalom Tourgeman, said that "the ambassador submitted his resignation, and the director general of the ministry of foreign affairs hopes he will reconsider."

The King and Mr. Netanyahu met on short notice in Aqaba in which they resolved differences over Israel's commitment to supply water to Jordan in accordance with the peace treaty signed between the two countries. The press was not notified prior to the meeting and some agency reports branded it as "secret."

"There is no room for my service here," the radio quoted Mr. Eran as saying in his letter. It said the



Israel's ambassador to Jordan, Oded Eran (left), shaking hands with Jordanian Foreign Minister Fayez Tarawneh, after the new ambassador presented his credentials a few days ago. Mr. Eran has resigned (AFP file photo)

ambassador complained that he could not expect good treatment in Jordan if his own government treated him poorly.

"I have no intention to be a censor or an obstacle to meetings but there is a need to brief the embassy on

actions being taken," Israel Radio quoted Mr. Eran as saying in a sharply worded letter of resignation.

The Associated Press reported that in his letter of resignation, Mr. Eran wrote he could not go on with his duties after he was kept out

of the picture by the Israeli government on such an important event.

It said Mr. Eran's resignation was part of the ongoing friction between the prime minister's office and the

(Continued on page 7)

Israel says 'Mega' is CIA Israel desk chief

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel has formally explained to Washington its version of events that sparked a U.S. probe into a possible Israeli spy scandal, the Yediot Ahronot daily newspaper said on Tuesday.

The Washington Post said last week an investigation was launched after the National Security Agency intercepted a conversation between Israeli officials in Washington and Tel Aviv which referred to someone code-named "Mega" who could obtain a sensitive U.S. letter to Palestinian President Yasser Arafat.

The Yediot Ahronot said that Israel had informed the United States the code-name "Mega" was a term used for the head of the Israel desk at the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

"This information has been relayed to the U.S. Justice Department, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the National Security Council following an investigation by the Mossad, foreign ministry and those responsible for making communications secure," it said.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's Communications Adviser David Bar-Ilan refused to comment directly on the report but said that "Israel is discussing the issue with the (U.S.) administration."

"I reiterate that we are not employing any illegal means against the United States government," Mr. Bar-Ilan told Reuters.

U.S. Attorney General

(Continued on page 7)

Israel eases closure of West Bank and Gaza

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israel Tuesday eased its latest closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, saying it would allow 65,000 Palestinian labourers and merchants to enter Israel.

Israel had sealed the West Bank and Gaza Strip at midnight Saturday, ahead of the observance of Memorial Day Sunday and Independence Day Monday. The restrictions barred more than two million Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza from entering Israel. The army routinely closes the Palestinian areas during holidays to prevent possible attacks by militants.

In addition, there have

been prolonged security closures in the past four years in response to terror attacks.

Each day of closure costs the Palestinian economy about \$4 million in lost trade and wages, according to U.N. officials.

In easing the closure, the army announced Tuesday it would allow 30,000 married Palestinians over the age of 28 from Gaza and 28,000 over the age of 25 from the West Bank to return to jobs in Israel.

The army said it would also grant permits to 7,000 merchants to come to Israel.

Erbakan: Exercises with Israel off, military denies

ANKARA (AP) — Turkish Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan on Tuesday claimed that naval manoeuvres with Israel were put off indefinitely, but the Turkish military denied that. Mr. Erbakan said, "the manoeuvres are postponed to coming years" when questioned by journalists about the exercises. Exercises involving Israel, Turkey and the United States were planned for this summer in the Mediterranean. A military official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said there was no postponement of the exercises planned for this summer. Mr. Erbakan and his pro-Islamic Welfare Party vigorously opposed relations with Israel, but since coming to power a year ago he has softened his stance. Israel is upgrading 54 of Turkey's F-4 fighter jets under a \$600 million project.

King, Godal review latest peace process developments

Crown Prince calls for international cooperation

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Tuesday reaffirmed Jordan's support for all efforts designed to give momentum to the peace process and its backing for endeavours to end the present deadlock in the peace negotiations.

The King was speaking at a meeting at the Royal Court with visiting Norwegian Foreign Minister Bjorn Tore Godal with whom he reviewed the current peace efforts on all tracks particularly on the Israeli-Palestinian track.

At the meeting which was attended by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, Chief of the Royal Court Awn Khasawneh and Foreign Minister Fayez Tarawneh, Mr. Godal voiced his country's appreciation of King Hussein's endeavours to achieve a just and durable peace.

Earlier, Mr. Godal was received by Crown Prince Hassan who stressed the need for regional and international cooperation in the development of the Jordan Rift Valley as a project with common benefits to the countries of the region.

Speaking in the presence of Dr. Tarawneh, Prince Hassan called for support to regional water projects which aim at enabling the region to secure its growing needs of

water supplies.

He discussed the refugees problem, underlining their need for continued assistance and stressing the need for a solution to their problem in accordance with international law.

Mr. Godal expressed his country's readiness to provide aid to Jordan's economic development plans especially in implementing the social safety net and in boosting social productivity.

In remarks upon his arrival in Jordan Tuesday, Mr. Godal said the visit was part of a regional tour designed to discuss issues connected to the peace process noting that he was going to Israel on the next leg of his current mission.

Later Mr. Godal was received by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali with whom he discussed means of giving impetus to the peace process and Jordan's support for peace negotiations.

Dr. Majali said: "King Hussein has stressed time and again that the Jordanian-Israeli peace agreement should be a model to follow by others," noting that there were several obstacles on the Palestinian Israeli track which need strenuous efforts to tackle with.

He added: "The Palestinian question is the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict in the

Middle East."

After the meeting which was attended by Dr. Tarawneh, Mr. Godal said that he was trying to bring peace back and that he discussed with prime minister peace developments and bilateral relations and a host of bilateral issues.

Dr. Tarawneh said after the meeting at the Prime Ministry with Mr. Godal that "fundamental differences remain between the Israelis and the Palestinians and many things were still hanging."

Dr. Tarawneh said: "during the meeting the Norwegian foreign minister was briefed on investment opportunities in Jordan and other economic developments."

Mr. Godal said after the meeting to Jordan Television: "I am really trying my best on behalf of Norway to bring peace process back on track, the peace process has been stalled between Palestinians and Israelis for a while and Norway has played a big part in the past."

Dr. Tarawneh said: "There are still fundamental differences and especially on the settlement issue, in particular on Jabal Abu Ghneim, that's why there is continuous dialogue from U.S. Coordinator Dennis Ross."

Crown Prince chairs special committee to develop defence

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday issued a Royal Decree approving the recommendation of the prime minister and minister of defence to form a new committee for the development of the country's defence resources under the chairmanship of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and with the membership of a number of specialised officials.

The committee will aim at broadening coordination and

cooperation between the Jordanian Armed Forces and scientific research organisations, universities and national industries in order to benefit from the highly qualified human resources at the Armed Forces.

The committee will work towards improving the investment environment, enhancing the competitiveness of Jordanian industries and increasing the productivity of the national economy.

The prime minister had recommended the formation of the committee in order to activate institutionalised cooperation between the Armed Forces and national scientific organisations.

This cooperation is expected to yield positive results for the country in the light of the numerous scientific and technological achievements the Armed Forces have made under the care and supervision of His Majesty King Hussein.

Man kills wife, 4 children

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A 40-year-old father Tuesday shot and killed his wife and four of his six children in Karak, then turned himself in to the authorities, officials said.

Ahmad, seven, Basma, six, Sahar, one, Ibrahim, four months and their 35-year-old mother, Samar Salah, were shot with a handgun at close range shortly after midnight Monday, officials said.

The suspect, Awad M., told police that he killed his wife and children to cleanse his honour, an official source said.

According to the source, "the suspect claimed that a man knocked at his door late at night and that when he opened the door the man fled."

The source added that Awad said he suspected "the strange man had a relationship with his wife and suspected that the children were not his."

Family and relatives, however, said that Awad was in serious debt and that he shot his family because of financial problems.

Pathologist Mo'men Hadidi, head of the National Institute of Forensic Medicine, said that a pater-



A survivor of her own father's wrath, four-year-old Rasha is being treated at Karak government Hospital (Photo by Mohammad Khawaldeh)

nity test will be conducted on the murdered children. Dr. Hadidi said preliminary autopsy results revealed that each of the

four children was killed by one bullet to the head, and the mother died from a bullet.

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THE FACE OF THE FUTURE
MEC Middle East Complex

New earthquake hits Iran; relief trickles in

QAEN, Iran (R) — A second earthquake struck Iran's devastated eastern region and more international aid made its way Tuesday to survivors of a killer quake that displaced 50,000 people in the same region.

The new jolt late Monday struck with a force of 4.8 on the Richter scale as rescue teams searched among the rubble of 200 villages left in ruins by Saturday's 7.1 magnitude quake.

There was no word on casualties in the latest quake.

Iran Tuesday revised downwards casualty figures in Saturday's quake. Interior Ministry official Rasul Zargar, in Qaen, told the official news agency IRNA the latest figures stood at 1,560 dead and 2,810 injured.

There was no explanation for the change in figures from earlier official reports of 2,400 dead and 6,000 injured.

He said 10,500 tents, 25,000 blankets and large quantities of food and clothing had been given to survivors — most of whom were still wandering in the rubble of their ruined homes and burying their dead.

An Iranian Red Crescent spokesman said rescue workers would comb the quake-stricken areas one more time for the living and the dead before winding up their operations.

Villagers digging with shovels and their bare hands Monday pulled out a woman alive from the rubble of her home.

Michael Schulenburg, U.N. resident coordinator in Tehran, said Tuesday his office had so far received \$600,000 in cash donations from different U.N. agencies and \$35,000 from Denmark which would be used to purchase needed relief goods in Iran.

He told Reuters a more detailed list of the aid being received through the day would be issued Wednesday morning.

Mr. Schulenburg said a French aircraft carrying 39 tonnes of emergency equipment and medicine has arrived at Mashhad airport while one from Italy loaded with 36 tonnes of medicine and other aid was due in later Tuesday.

He said the U.N. has set up an office at Mashhad airport to receive the aid, some of which was also being received by the Iranian Red Crescent Society.

U.N. officials in Tehran said rescue and relief work was going well but three strong quakes that rocked Iran in the past four months had put a huge strain on its emergency sup-

plies and sparked an urgent need for international help.

"There is a shortage of tents and more than one family is having to share one tent," Mr. Schulenburg said. "There is also urgent need for water purification systems."

He said between 150,000 and 200,000 Iranians were estimated to have been made homeless by the three quakes that hit Iran since February. Many were living in tents.

"This has put a huge strain on stockpiles," he added.

Quake-prone Iran is accustomed to dealing with natural disasters but has appealed through the United Nations for aid. It asked for food, medicine, tents, clothing, water tanks, cookers, ambulances and four-wheel-drive vehicles.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent societies appealed Monday for \$8.2 million to help Iran.

Several countries made pledges or said they had sent aid, including Iran's foe the United States and European Union states involved in a diplomatic row with Tehran.

Washington said it was contributing \$100,000 through the International Committee of the Red Cross. German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel pledged 500,000 marks (\$290,000).

Iran's Arab neighbours Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates said they were sending aid. So did Egypt.

The Saudi-based Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) appealed to its 52-member states to extend assistance to Iran.

Turkey said it would send two plane-loads of emergency aid.

Iran has put initial estimates of the extent of damage in the region at 300 billion rials (\$100 million), but Mr. Zargar said a total damage evaluation would be released next week.

President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani visited the stricken areas on Monday and pledged that the government would help rebuild the villages and construct quake-resistant buildings.

The government said it would pay 500,000 rials (\$167) to every person who lost a relative, IRNA said.

RELIEF ARRIVES AS NEW QUAKE HITS IRAN

A new quake struck the Qaen region of Iran on Monday as rescue teams searched villages left in ruins by Saturday's 7.1 magnitude quake

Iran officials revised downwards casualty figures in Saturday's quake to 1,560 dead and 2,810 injured



Officials said 10,500 tents, 25,000 blankets and large quantities of food and clothing had been distributed

REUTERS



IN SOLIDARITY WITH DAKAMSEH: President of the Jordan Engineers Association Leith Shheilat on Tuesday places a sticker on his car in support of the Jordanian soldier Ahmad Dakamseh who shot dead seven Israeli schoolgirls at a border post last March. The defiant act was part of a solidarity campaign by opponents of Jordan's peace treaty with Israel (Reuters photo)

Squabble over burial of alleged land dealer

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — The family of a Palestinian killed amid allegations he sold land to Jews

demanded Tuesday that Muslim cleric either provide proof of wrongdoing or give the man a religious burial.

However, the Palestinians' chief Muslim cleric, Ikrama Sabri, said his ruling stood by his ruling, or fatwa, that the victim, Farid Bashiti, was an infidel and must not be buried in a Muslim cemetery.

"The fatwa is very clear. No washing, no prayer and burial for those who sell land to Jews," Sheikh Sabri said, adding that it was up to the authorities to prove whether Bashiti was guilty.

Israeli authorities tried to step into the dispute, arranging to have Bashiti, 70, buried in a Muslim cemetery in Israel on

Tuesday morning. However, Bashiti's family balked at the last minute, and the burial was called off.

Land is at the core of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, with both sides trying to stake claim to as much territory as possible in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and east Jerusalem.

The Palestinians want to establish a state in those areas.

In the past, Palestinians who sold land to Jews routinely left the region for fear of retribution by Palestinian activists.

The Bashiti case marked the first time a killing of an alleged land dealer was linked to the Palestinian National Authority (PNA).

would face the death penalty.

Three days later, on Thursday, Bashiti was seen at the headquarters of Force 17, Mr. Arafat's elite bodyguard. Later Thursday, Bashiti was found dead in the Palestinian-controlled city of Ramallah, his skull crushed, hands tied behind his back and mouth sealed with plastic tape.

Israeli officials have said they believed members of Force 17 killed Bashiti.

Bashiti's family demanded Tuesday that Palestinian officials either prove Bashiti sold land to Jews or let him have a religious burial. Bashiti was questioned several times by security forces, but was never charged, said his son, Assem.

"If there is any proof that he was guilty of selling land to Jews, the family is ready to burn the body," the Bashitis said in a statement sent to several Palestinian newspapers as a paid advertisement.

The newspapers did not run the statement. The newspapers also made no mention of a news conference by the family Monday, though it was covered by several Palestinian journalists.

Jerusalem police spokesman Shmuel Ben-Ruby said Bashiti's family initially agreed to have Bashiti buried Tuesday morning in Jaffa, which has a large Arab population. "We do not know why the family has changed its mind," Mr. Ben Ruby said.

Jaffa's chief Muslim cleric, Sheikh Bassam Abu Zeid, said he would have refused to bury Bashiti. "If they (the Israelis) ask us to bury him, we will refuse. We have a standing policy not to bury collaborators,"

Paper confiscated in S. Arabia for article quoting Ben Laden

RIYADH (AP) — Authorities confiscated a newspaper owned by a nephew of King Fahd for publishing an article on a Saudi Islamist militant who has declared war on U.S. troops in the kingdom, officials said Tuesday.

Monday's edition of the Arabic-language Al Hayat, seized before it reached newsstands, contained an article quoting Osama Ben Laden, who was stripped of his Saudi citizenship in 1994 and is believed to be a leading financier of Islamist radicals.

The officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity, confirmed the article — quoting statements from an interview with the Cable News Network (CNN) — were behind the confiscation. The Saudi press is strictly censored and articles on Saudi dissidents are banned.

"We have focused our declaration of jihad on striking at the U.S. soldiers inside Saudi Arabia," Mr. Ben Laden was quoted as saying in Al Hayat, which is published in London and circulated widely in the

Arab World. Mr. Ben Laden praised the 1995 and 1996 bombings in Saudi Arabia that killed 24 U.S. troops but denied any involvement.

"I have great respect for the people who did this. They are heroes. What they did is a big honour that I missed participating in."

At least 5,000 U.S. military personnel are stationed in Saudi Arabia, a key U.S. ally in the region.

Al Hayat is owned by Prince Khalid Ben Sultan, a son of Saudi Defence Minister Prince Sultan.

Egyptian government to hold on to telecommunications sector

CAIRO (AP) — Egypt will privatise its new cellular telephone network and allow private investors to build and run airports and roads, but has no plans to sell off its huge telecommunications sector, a cabinet minister said Tuesday.

The announcement by Public Sector Minister Atef Obeid at a two-day business conference in Cairo led economists and bankers to criticise the pace of Egypt's privatisation.

"We are not ready yet to privatise the telecommunications sector," Mr. Obeid said. "It will remain in government hands for a time, but we are inviting the private sector to invest in parallel with the government in roads, ports,

airports and cellular telephones."

Mr. Obeid, who is in charge of privatisation, said Egypt needed up to \$8 billion of investment a year to meet its target of seven per cent to eight per cent economic growth by 2000 and to create 500,000 to 600,000 jobs a year.

Egypt's economy grows by five per cent a year, and Mr. Obeid said he expected most of the investment to come from increased savings by Egypt's 63 million people.

"We are not ready yet to privatise the telecommunications sector," Mr. Obeid said. "It will remain in government hands for a time, but we are inviting the private sector to invest in parallel with the government in roads, ports,

airports and cellular telephones."

Speaking to reporters later, he said a company running the cellular telephone network, which was installed last year, will be sold to investors. He gave no details.

"The private sector must first prove to the public that it can offer a better service at a reasonable price before we move ahead to other sectors," he said.

Asked about complaints that privatisation, which began in 1991 as part of a reform programme, was moving too slowly, Mr. Obeid said: "We are moving faster than we had been expected to. On average, we privatise one company per week."

But the bankers and economists attending Tuesday's conference said Egypt's privatisation programme remained slow and not sufficiently attractive to foreign investors.

"Sell them all, and as soon as possible" was the advice given to Egypt by Marcelo Guigale, a World Bank economist.

The slow pace and hesitation in privatising were responsible for some flight of capital, he said, adding that "people are still not sure that the economic reforms are there to stay."

He also warned the government against not doing enough to help the poor in a country where he estimated that five million people live

on a dollar or less a day.

Paul Raphael, managing director of Merrill Lynch, U.K., warned that "foreign investment will not reach its potential until the government privatises flagship industries."

Mr. Raphael and Khaled Al Sharif, a World Bank economist, also criticised Egypt's step-by-step privatisation of some companies.

"It is a lengthy and unnecessary process," Mr. Sharif said. Since 1991, Egypt has brought inflation down from 22 per cent to about seven per cent and seen its foreign reserves reach a healthy \$19 billion. It also has liberalised banks, introduced more equitable tax collection and lowered tariffs.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO
14:05 Flintstones
14:30 Cartoon — Adventure of the Rainbow Pond
15:00 French Programmes
16:00 America's Funniest People
16:25 Spell Binder
16:50 Doc — Forests of the World
17:15 Border Town
18:00 French Programmes
19:30 News Headlines
19:35 Comedy — Grace Under Fire
20:00 Children's Diary
20:30 Challenges
21:10 Drama — Spencer for Hire
22:00 News in English
22:25 Cobra
23:00 Hart to Hart

PRAYER TIMES

04:06 Fajr
05:35 Sunrise/Duha
12:32 Dhuhur
16:12 Asr
19:29 Maghreb
20:57 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweifheh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Tel. 632785

St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440

De la Salle Church Tel. 641757

Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622286

Anglican Church Tel. 652826

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Amman International Church Tel. 827126

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457

The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932

Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

English-speaking Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology
Hot, dry, and dusty weather conditions will prevail with winds northwesterly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be

northerly moderate and seas calm.

Amman 20/33

Aqaba 24/39

Deserts 21/36

Jordan Valley 23/38

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 34, Aqaba 41 Humidity readings: Amman 29 per cent, Aqaba 23 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

Dr. Hisham Kan'an 790286

Dr. Jihad Samour 765018

Dr. Ghaleb Zawaidh 736011

Dr. Khalidoun Asfour 699440

Firas pharmacy 661912

Ferdows pharmacy 890280

Al Asema pharmacy 637055

Al Salam pharmacy 636730

Yacoub pharmacy 644945

Shmeisani pharmacy 637660

Nairookh pharmacy 623672

Najib pharmacy 847632

DRBD:

Dr. Ghazi Ta'anneh 250080

Al Quds pharmacy (—)

ZARQA:

Dr. Akram Haddad 985550

Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Department 661111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777

Fire Brigade 617101

Blood Bank 775121

Highway Police 843402

Traffic Police 896390

Public Security Department 630321

Hotel Complaints 605800

Price Complaints 661176

Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467

Amman Municipality Complaints 787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 010230

Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101

Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101

Jordan Television 773111

Radio Jordan 774111

Water Authority 680100

Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power Company 636381

RJ Flight Information 08-

53200

Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32

Khalidi Maternity, 644281/6

Jabal Amman Maternity 642362

Malhas, J. Amman 636140

Palestine, Shmeisani 607071

Shmeisani Hospital 669131

University Hospital 845845

Al-Muasher Hospital 66727/9

The Islamic, Abdali 666126/7

Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6

Italian, Al-Mohajreen 77101/3

Al-Bashir, 775111/26

Army, Marka 891611/15

Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50

Amal Hospital 674155

The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199

ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323

Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560

Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732

Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)990990

IRBID:

Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555

Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275

Ibn Al Nafees Hospital (02)247100

AQABA:

Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200 where it should always be verified.

Information on other flights are supplied on phone 08 (52700) or 08(53250).

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

08:00 Damascus (RJ)

08:35 Larnaca (RJ)

09:35 Jeddah (RJ)

09:50 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)

13:45 Jeddah (add) (RJ)

17:45 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)

18:05 Istanbul (RJ)

19:05 Rome (RJ)

19:10 Paris, Brussels (RJ)

19:10 London, Berlin (RJ)

19:20 Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)

19:35 Madrid, Geneva (RJ)

Queen inaugurates Al Amal Centre for Special Education in Ramtha

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor Tuesday inaugurated Al Amal Centre for Special Education in Ramtha, a Royal Court statement said.

Al Amal, one of 12 centres established by the General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS), provides medical and social care, therapeutic and recreational activities and rehabilitation and integration of disabled children into society.

The Ramtha municipality donated land to the centre which is under the care of the charitable Union Societies in Irbid.

The Queen toured Al Amal's centre which can accommodate up to 60 children whose ages range from 6-14 years, as well as its physio- and occupational therapy department, the statement said.

Queen Noor, who launched the Multi-handicapped Welfare Society in 1984 and inaugurated the other 11 Amal centres, stressed the importance of early detection, intervention and occupational therapy which can prevent a disability from turning into a serious physical, sensory or mental handicap.

The Queen noted that while Jordan is fortunate to have the first and only Occupational Therapy College in the Arab Middle East, the country must establish rehabilitative departments in public and private universities which would teach speech, physio- and occupational therapy, as well as ensure the employment of its graduates in public and private medical institutions.

In his speech, President of GUVS, Dr. Abdulhadi Khatib spoke of "51 voluntary centres which care for the disabled in the country and whose services benefit 22,000 people," adding that there still remain "100,000 disabled persons in Jordan who are in need of special care," according to the statement.

The Queen, accompanied by HRH Princess Alia Al Faisal, was received by the governor of Irbid, the mayor of Ramtha, President of Irbid University of Science and Technology Professor Saad Hijazi and members of the GUVS Council.

IAF reportedly exploring possibility of joining NCP coalition

By Francesca Ciriaci
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Islamic Action Front (IAF) is reportedly exploring the possibility of participating in a coalition with the newly-licensed National Constitutional Party (NCP), Arabic press reports said.

In an interview this week with Al Sabeel, the Arabic weekly of the Muslim Brotherhood, IAF Secretary General Ishaq Farhan was quoted as favouring the formation of a coalition government with the NCP which was born from the merger of nine centrist political parties and officially licensed by the Ministry of Interior earlier this month.

"If the NCP agrees to form a coalition government which will combat normalisation (of ties with Israel), prevent Zionist infiltration and emphasise issues of domestic interest, we have no objection to joining such a coalition," Dr. Farhan told Al Sabeel.

Also Tuesday, the Arabic daily Al Aswaq quoted Senator and member of the IAF Executive Committee Abdul Latif Arabiyat as welcoming the consolidation of the nine former political parties into the NCP and demonstrating interest in the possibility of participating in a coalition government with the new group.

The largest party merging into the

NCP was Al Ahd whose secretary general, Abdul Hadi Majali, has been appointed by the leaders of the other eight parties as NCP secretary general.

The IAF, Jordan's strongest opposition party, has held its role as opposition since the 1991 coalition government of former Prime Minister Mudar Badran.

Negotiations exploring the possibility of the Islamists' participation in a coalition government were under way in the early months of this year, during the tenure of former Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti.

But diverging stands on key issues like normalisation with Israel and

the IMF-prescribed economic adjustment programme stymied negotiations.

In a recent interview with the Jordan Times, Dr. Farhan said that he expected his party to gain more votes in the upcoming elections than during the previous elections of 1993.

During the 1993 parliamentary elections, the IAF won 17 seats in the 80-member Lower House.

Arabic press reports quoted Dr. Farhan on Tuesday as announcing that the IAF is planning to field approximately 40 candidates under its ticket, and expects that the number of its elected representatives be "not less than 16."

University deems political education as compulsory

By Nadia Mukhlis
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — National and political education will be a compulsory subject in Mu'ta University as of the new academic year, President of Mu'ta University Eid Dahiyat announced last week.

The decision was taken last week in a private meeting among deans of seven departments in the university and was the result of perceived ignorance of general history among students, Dr. Dahiyat told the Jordan Times Tuesday.

Mu'ta University consists of seven colleges, the faculty of arts, science, economy and administrative science, education, law, agriculture and engineering, Dr. Dahiyat explained.

All students will have to pass this course before graduating from the university and receiving their degrees, he added.

"National and political education is an important part of the university curricula to understand national principles, values and consciousness," according to the president.

The course, comprising three credit hours, includes four components covering various topics, Dr. Dahiyat said.

The topics include various subjects such as the history of the Hashemite rule, the Great Arab Revolt, the establishment of the Hashemite Kingdom, the national military and its role, political and democratic influences, internal and external challenges

which include poverty, unemployment, increased population rates and national security.

Outlining the peace process and the significance and value of Islam are aspects that the academy hopes to cover as well, he added.

Dr. Dahiyat, a former minister of education, stated that previously he had recommended that national and political education be taught to high school students.

"Cognisance of our national history and building a strong feeling of belonging to the nation and its leadership will result in an educated and loyal generation," Dr. Dahiyat said.

Mu'ta is a university with a special nature, as it comprises military and civil wings, he added.

The military wing graduates potential leaders of the Armed Forces, therefore their national knowledge should be broad and accurate in order to deepen the relation between students, the country and its leadership, Dr. Dahiyat said.

The new academic resolution also aims to inform students of Jordan's political role in regional and global aspects and to accentuate the importance of the Jordanian leadership and their continuous efforts to build a positive future for Jordan and its neighbours, he stated.

Mu'ta University is the first in Jordan to adopt and include this programme in its agenda, he concluded.

Woman and her daughter found slain in apartment

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Police are investigating the murder of a woman and her daughter, whose deteriorating bodies were found Tuesday morning in their apartment in the Wihdat neighbourhood of Amman, official sources said.

The corpses of Amal Ahmad Saleh, 54, an Egyptian national, and her 10-year-old daughter, Zakieh Hussein Abdul Nabi, an Iraqi national, were found by police in the living room of their apartment.

One official source told the Jordan Times that preliminary autopsy results indicated that the mother had received at least two stabs to her back, while her daughter Zakieh died of strangulation.

"Autopsy results also indicated that the women and her child were dead no less than 48 hours and no more than 72 days," the official added.

According to another source, police were summoned by the building's owner, who informed the authorities that a foul odor

was emitting from Ms. Saleh's apartment.

The woman's husband, an Iraqi national, had returned to Baghdad three months prior to the incident.

Officials contacted by the Jordan Times Tuesday evening stated that they are investigating the case.

Meanwhile, police are questioning the parents of an 11-year-old child, who was found hanged in a deserted storage room next to his house in Marka Sunday, official sources said.

According to official sources, the child, Saleh Abdullah Alian, was found by his older brother dangling from a dress belt wrapped around his neck in the storage room in Wadi Qatir.

Pathologist Mo'men Hadidi, head of the National Institute of Forensic Medicine, said an autopsy performed on the child demonstrated that he died of strangulation.

"It would be most unusual to accept it as suicide, and I believe that it is a homicide unless otherwise proven," Dr. Hadidi said.

Autopsy results indicat-

ed that the child was not sexually assaulted, he added.

Irbid police Tuesday announced the detention of three people in connection with the death of a 70-year-old man, officials said.

The unidentified victim was buried 12 days ago, but the Amman prosecutor ordered the body exhumed for an autopsy examination which revealed that the man had been murdered.

"Autopsy results indicated that the man received several blows to the head and was strangled," an official source said.

As a result of the new autopsy results, police apprehended three people, including the victim's wife Fatmeh K., 70, her nephew Ahmad Jamil, 28, and a third woman, whom authorities would not identify.

Informed sources told the Jordan Times that the motive of the murder was financial in nature.

Police contacted Tuesday evening confirmed the incident but refused to elaborate.

U.S. embassy to sponsor trade fair

By Tanya Habjouqa
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The U.S. embassy will sponsor its fifth annual American promotion week with a trade fair aimed to expose Jordanians to "Made in the USA" products and services, embassy officials said.

Counselor for Economic and Commercial Affairs Gary Grappo emphasised the need to augment bilateral trade relations between the United States and Jordan.

"There are many opportunities in the trade relationship which have not been yet exploited," Mr. Grappo said.

He further stated that with the advance of the peace process, Jordan contains the potential of becoming a bridge for people and goods.

"We want to make sure that American goods are a part of that flow," he added.

The American embassy formed a partnership with World Trade Services of Jordan (WATS) and the U.S.-based SIFA Management group to present Jordan with its best trade show to date, Mr. Grappo said.

The National U.S.-Arab Chamber of Commerce is also working with the embassy to bring participating businesses from the United States, he said.

"Working with WATS and SIFA will enable us to make our fair bigger and better, and attract visitors and buyers from outside of Jordan," he affirmed.

WATS representative, Najib Tayara, stressed that the aim of the fair was not only to sell American products, but to present information on ways to conduct business with the United States and improve the local market.

Mr. Grappo asserted that trade between U.S. and Jordan was not at the level that it could be.

He said that Jordan's economic growth over the past five years has averaged over five per cent, but that its exports to the U.S. have been stagnant at around 18 to 20 million dollars.

"Our export growth has been slow," Mr. Grappo said. "While we exported more than 350 million dollars of goods last year (to Jordan), almost half of that was for wheat and feed grain."

He further stated that the

fair would introduce Jordanians to other high-quality U.S. products such as computer hardware, automobiles and parts, and industrial equipment.

The trade fair will be held June 9 through 13 at the Amman International Fair Hall in Marj Al Hamam.

Participants will include American companies, distributors, and governmental agencies, according to embassy brochures.

Jordanian businesses who distribute U.S. products will also participate in the fair, which provides an opportunity to showcase products to potential buyers from the entire region, Mr. Grappo said.

Trade fair registration is still open, with a current enrolment of 55 companies, including 12 from the United States, he said.

Mr. Grappo noted the rise in popularity of the trade fair, comparing the first show in 1993, in which less than 10 companies participated, to the 1996 fair in which 45 companies participated with 30,000 visitors attending.

During Monday's trade fair press conference, Mr. Grappo described the April 30th announcement, by U.S. Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky, that Jordan would be placed on the Special 301 Watch List for 1997.

The Special 301 provisions of the Trade Act require that the U.S. trade representative identify countries which deny adequate and effective intellectual property rights.

While the placement is not favourable for Jordan, there is no particular penalty, Mr. Grappo explained.

The placement warns potential U.S. investors, he said. "They won't do business in a country where their product could be [pirated]."

A more serious placement on the Priority Watch List entails possible trade sanctions against a particular country.

Jordan's placement is based primarily on patent piracy of pharmaceutical products, video recording, audio recording, and inadequate protection of copy rights, Mr. Grappo said.

"The Jordanian government is currently preparing new legislation to deal with this issue," he concluded.

Conference calls for increased road safety legislation

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordan Engineers' Association (JEA) Tuesday requested that the government enact new legislation regarding traffic requirements in Jordan and provide measures to help police control traffic.

JEA Civil Engineering Department Chief Mohammad Abu Affeh addressed the opening session of a three-day international conference on road and traffic engineering in Jordan.

Mr. Affeh maintained that the government ought to create a higher-traffic council to develop general plans and policies and maintain coordination with various authorities in matters connected with safety on the roads.

Road accidents can be attributed to many factors, including road and vehicle conditions, but the most salient is the human element and therefore the JEA is calling for increased awareness regarding road safety and for due attention to be given to road design and construction.

Last month, the Public Security Department (PSD) revealed that last year there were an estimated 33,784 road accidents in which 352 people were killed and 15,375 injured — an increase from the 28,970 road accidents in which 469 persons were killed in 1995.

The meeting was opened by Deputy

Prime Minister for Services and Minister of Administrative Development Abdullah Ensour, deputising for Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali.

Dr. Khair Jadaan, head of the committee which prepared the conference, stated that reports to be reviewed by the participants cover traffic rules, road conditions, environmental pollution, transportation of toxic waste and road networks in Jordan.

The conference is being attended by delegates from Jordan, Iraq, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, Palestine, Libya, Yemen, New Zealand and Canada.

UNRWA laments 'insufficient funds'

AMMAN (J.T.) — The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) is facing increasing challenges, most notably stemming from insufficient funds received from donor nations, UNRWA Commissioner General Peter Hansen announced Tuesday.

Subsequent to a meeting with Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, Mr. Hansen declared the agency satisfied with and appreciative of the role played by Jordan to succour Palestinian refugees, the largest percentage of whom have been living in the Kingdom since the 1948 Arab-Israeli war.

UNRWA largely depends on Jordanian efforts with the global community to clarify the refugee situation and the challenges facing the agency, Mr. Hansen explained.

Reviewing the general condition of the Palestinian refugees and the services offered them in the Arab host countries, Dr. Majali remarked that the deficit in the UNRWA budget is adversely affecting services to the Palestinian refugees.

The premier voiced Jordan's continued support for UNRWA in its drive to overcome current obstacles and procure funds from donor nations.

Many of the Kingdom's refugees will benefit from the recently created social safety net which targets needy people and aims at creating income-generating projects over the next few years, he added.

Last month, Mr. Hansen detailed the agency's current financial crisis during trips to Copenhagen, Geneva and London.

UNRWA's projected \$50 million deficit for 1997 could mean that the agency will soon be forced to suspend certain services unless additional contributions are received, according to UNRWA news, a release from UNRWA Public Information Office in Amman.

"With such pride in our reputation, we cannot afford that UNRWA deteriorate and thus compound the anxiety and hardship which the refugee community is facing in these uncertain times," Mr. Hansen was quoted as saying after his tour.

UNRWA was created in 1949 to serve those who fled or were exiled from their homes in Palestine during the establishment of Israel. The agency provides education, health and relief services for more than 2.1 million refugees including hundreds of thousands in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

UNRWA estimates that nearly 1.1 million registered refugees currently live in Jordan.

WHAT'S GOING ON

Ministry publishes water distribution programme

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Water and Irrigation Tuesday published a water distribution programme for the 12 governorates in the Kingdom.

It described the programme as effective as of May 1 and appealed to the public to economise water usage for domestic, industrial and agricultural purposes.

A ministry statement maintained that the distribution programme has been adopted over the past few years during the summer when water consumption generally increases, in order to ensure fair water distribution to all.

According to the published programme, which appeared Tuesday in the Arabic daily newspapers, the ministry named the different areas in each city and district of the country's governorates and set dates for their turns to receive water supplies two days each week.

The statement called on households to secure sufficient water tanks to store water during the pumping

dates to cover their needs until the next date of supply.

The ministry announcement came one day after it announced the inception of a programme to increase public awareness regarding domestic water usage.

Tuesday's announcement coincided with a statement by Minister of Water and Irrigation Munther Haddadin who, at a press briefing, stated that the government will hike water tariffs as of October 1997.

The decision was taken, he stated, in light of the continual rise of public water provision costs.

Those who receive water supplies have been paying only 82 per cent of the cost of operating and maintaining the water network, according to the minister.

However those consumers who do not consume excessive amounts of water, around 60 per cent of the total public, will remain unaffected by the measure, he concluded.

Al al Bait covers joint Muslim-Christian meetings

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Royal Society for Islamic Civilisation Research, Al al Bait Foundation, Tuesday announced the publication of a third edition of the "Annotated Index of Muslim-Christian Meetings from 1954 to 1997."

The publication documents 122 Muslim-Christian meetings organised by 54 sponsors and convened on 41 countries across four continents.

It reflects the efforts exerted by institutions and research centres in the Kingdom to boost inter-faith dialogue as a main vehicle to mutual understanding and peaceful, constructive co-existence, according to Assistant President at Al al Bait Foundation Farouq Jarrah.

An introduction by Al al Bait Foundation President Nasserredin Assad opens the 190-page document.

"We documented all the meetings of which we have so far heard," Mr. Jarrah stated.

He told the Jordan Times that for each meeting the newly published index specifies "names of the organisers, place, date, agenda and a summary of the conclusions."

The first edition of the "Annotated Index of Muslim-Christian Meetings" was published in 1984.

A second edition followed in 1990.

The new third edition is available for consultation at the Al al Bait Foundation premises, according to Mr. Jarrah.

France's Juppe defends Europe, slams opposition

PARIS (R) — French Prime Minister Alain Juppe, defending the planned single European currency, hit out Tuesday at what he called an "eccentric coalition" of election opponents ranging from Communists to the far right.

Mr. Juppe, under fire from some of his own allies for lacklustre campaigning for the May 25-June 1 general election, urged voters to re-elect his centre-right coalition to give President Jacques Chirac stable government for the next five years.

"This eccentric coalition stretching from the Communist Party to the (far-right) National Front should make voters pause for thought," he told Europe 1 Radio.

Front leader Jean-Marie Le Pen said Monday he would prefer an upset win by the Socialist-led opposition to a victory for Mr. Juppe, saying the left was more likely to derail Mr. Chirac's drive for a single European currency, the euro.

"Let's not be ungrateful to Europe," Mr. Juppe said.

"If we have peace in Europe, it is due to European integration," he said. "We have to make the euro an instrument both of stability and growth."

"I won't resign myself to economic growth of 1.5 or two per cent," he said. He dismissed opposition charges

that he was planning a new bout of unpopular austerity to help qualify for the euro from 1999.

Both the Communists and the National Front were bitter opponents of the Maastricht Treaty on European Union, approved by a wafer-thin majority in a 1992 referendum. The Socialists favour the euro, on certain conditions.

Mr. Juppe charged that the Socialists' campaign promises were vague and that party leader Lionel Jospin still had to explain how he would fund the creation of 700,000 promised youth jobs as part of a drive to cut record unemployment.

The latest poll, by BVA for Paris Match magazine, projected Mr. Juppe's coalition would win between 275 and 331 National Assembly seats to 223-273 for the combined left and 0-2 seats for the far-right National Front.

Mr. Juppe, shown by opinion polls to be deeply unpopular, deflected questions about whether he would be staying on as premier if the centre-right won.

"This election is not about choosing a prime minister," Mr. Juppe said. "A majority is being chosen... This is not a presidential election."

Some politicians in the centre-right coalition have started jockeying for positions should Mr. Chirac choose not to reappoint him.

"I'm completely proud of the work accomplished since 1993, especially since 1995, and I am campaigning both on what has been done and about the new plan that needs to be given," he said. Mr. Juppe was appointed premier in 1995.

A poll last week showed just nine per cent of voters wanted Mr. Juppe to stay on as premier, well behind right-wing rivals including his predecessor, Edouard Balladur, and National Assembly Speaker Philippe Seguin.

Former President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, a member of the centre-right coalition, appeared to join the anti-Juppe chorus last week when he said France should shift to bolder and simpler policies and voters wanted to be "governed differently."

But the two men shared a platform in Mr. Giscard d'Estaing's Clermont-Ferrand constituency Monday night and Mr. Juppe showed no sign of hard feelings.

The prime minister referred to his reputation as an uncaring technocrat when asked in the radio interview whether he was hurt by such attacks. "Everyone says I'm an insensitive computer, so I don't know why you're asking," he said.

A second poll, conducted by the Louis Harris firm for LCI Television, found the combined right winning 40 per cent of the vote in the

first round to 37 per cent for the combined left and 15 per cent for the National Front.

The Harris poll did not project breakdowns of National Assembly seats.

Curiously, both the Harris and BVA polls detected the left gaining strength in the first-round vote compared to week-earlier surveys.

Harris found that 57 per cent believed the centre-right would win, a dip of six per cent from a week earlier, while 25 per cent thought the left would win, an increase of four percentage points for the week.

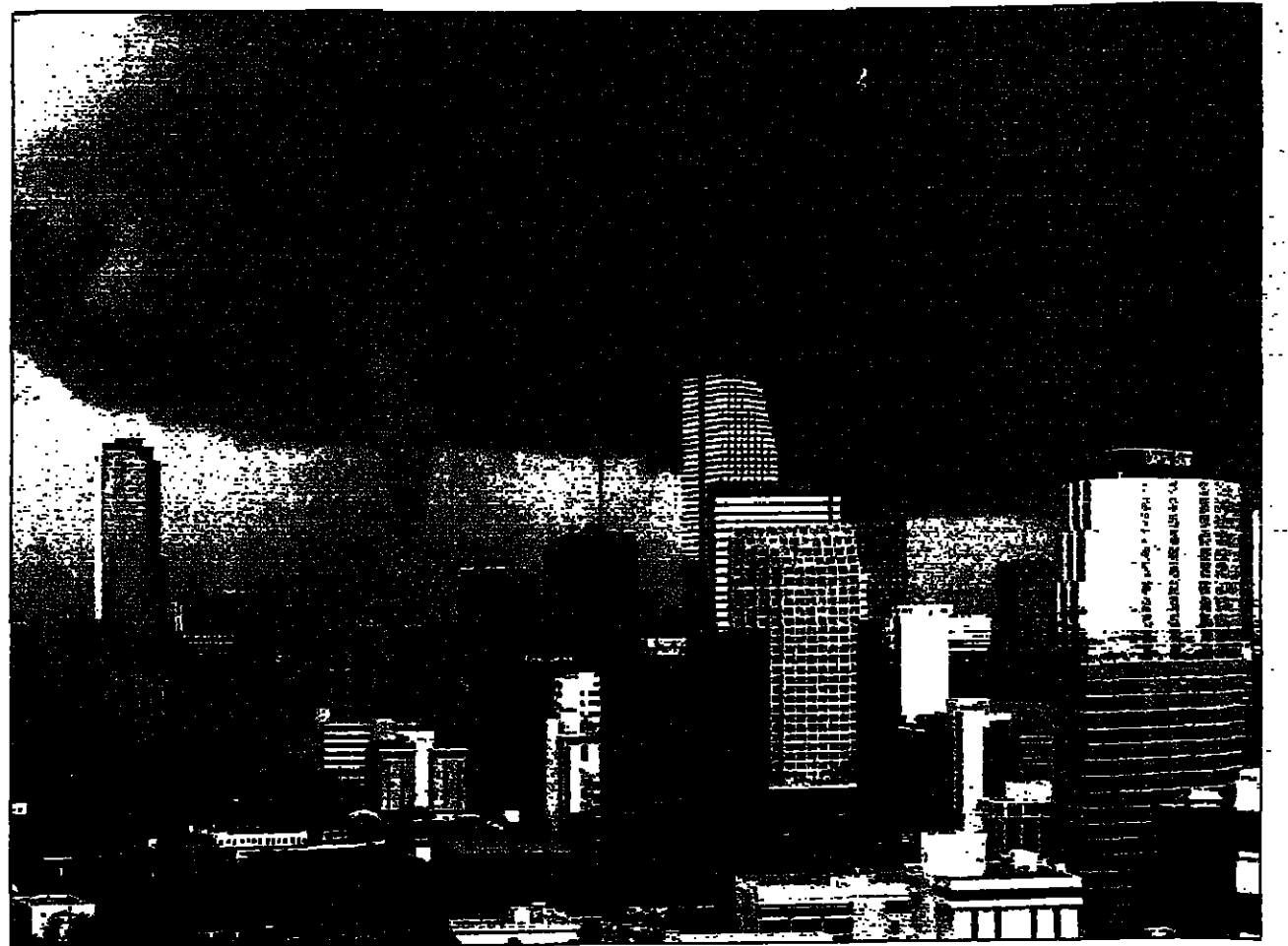
But the trend was not enough to deprive the centre-right of victory in the run-off, BVA found.

The centre-right's score began mounting in the polls shortly after President Jacques Chirac penned an opinion article for regional newspapers denouncing past Socialist rule and urging voters to give his government a new vote of confidence.

Yet the Harris poll found that just one out of five voters had actually read the article and just 36 per cent of those found it to be convincing.

The Harris survey relied on interviews with 871 registered voters conducted Friday and Saturday.

BVA interviewed 1,075 registered voters, also Friday and Saturday.



A tornado whips through Miami Monday, the closest such a storm has come to the downtown area in recent memory, witnesses said. No one was reported seriously injured (Reuters photo)

Tornado narrowly misses downtown Miami

MIAMI (R) — A Tornado whipped through Miami Monday, uprooting trees, ripping off roofs, smashing windows and overturning cars as it narrowly missed the city's busy downtown business district.

Several passengers and crew on an American Airlines flight were reported injured when the plane was struck by turbulence at 4,900 metres. But no one was reported seriously hurt on the ground.

The spectacular, swirling funnel cloud churned across the northern edge of downtown Miami into Biscayne Bay, skirting the Venetian and MacArthur causeways linking Miami to Miami Beach.

It snapped light poles and swept a cloud of debris into the air. Started office workers ran to their windows to watch the spinning storm.

"When it first hit we were in city hall and we went up to the balcony to have a look. It was scary. Thank God the damage was limited and no one was hurt badly," Miami Mayor Joe Carroll told reporters.

Several houses and apartment blocks in the Cuban immigrant area little Ha-

vana suffered damage. The roof of one house was torn off and dumped on a lawn. A church was badly damaged. Chunks of concrete were dislodged from other homes and city officials later condemned several buildings.

Also badly hit was the citadel, a smart new office complex that was due to have its grand opening this week. A citadel security guard told how he and another employee hid behind furniture after grabbing a child who was walking down the street as glass panes shattered.

Cars in parking lots were overturned and crushed by trees and debris.

An American Airlines flight from Boston was sent into a holding pattern at 16,000 feet because of the storm. NBC affiliate WTVJ reported. "Then it felt like we hit a rock. The flight attendants just went flying," one passenger told WTVJ.

The Airbus, with 156 people on board, landed safely, but three people were taken to a hospital, it said.

Miami police spokesman Angel Calzadilla, who witnessed the storm as it passed Miami Police

Headquarters, told Reuters: "Mailboxes, trees complete with roots, flying around. Planks flying around like notebook paper. You don't hear this sound, you feel it. The thumping in your chest was overwhelming."

In the aftermath, streets were littered with bricks, concrete, wood and broken tree limbs.

It was the first Tornado to come so close to downtown Miami in recent memory, although the storms are frequent visitors to south Florida suburbs, particularly in summer.

Nearly five years ago, south Florida was hit by hurricane Andrew, the most destructive hurricane in U.S. history. Andrew caused more than \$20 billion in damage when it hit Miami's southern suburbs, destroying thousands of homes and leaving tens of thousands of residents homeless.

Monday's Tornado — a relatively weak one with winds of between 74 and 114 mph (118-182 kmph), according to meteorologists — touched down near Miami Police Department Headquarters, just missing the city's downtown core, where its major businesses

are located, and the port of Miami, heart of the region's cruise ship industry.

"I could see and feel this thing. You could actually sense the pressure dropping. You saw the sky getting dark," Calzadilla said. "The winds picked some people up and threw them against the walls of buildings, but we haven't heard of any serious injuries. We came out of this experience very fortunate."

The National Weather Service said the Tornado first emerged from a band of thunderstorms near Miami International Airport and moved near downtown before hitting the waters of Biscayne Bay near the Miami Herald building.

The Tornado threw up a geyser of spray as it struck the water and moved parallel to the busy roads connecting downtown Miami to Miami Beach.

Meteorologist Robert Balfour said if the Tornado had hit some of the city's tallest buildings it likely would have imploded windows, although most of south Florida's office towers were built to withstand hurricane-force winds.

Clinton starts using a walking cane

WASHINGTON (R) — President Bill Clinton cast away his crutches Monday and used a walking cane as he began the next phase of recovery from surgery on his right knee two months ago.

The president stepped gingerly down the steps from Air Force One leaning on a single cane in his left hand as he arrived back at Andrews Air Force Base from a week-long trip to Mexico, Costa Rica and Barbados.

With wife Hillary at his side, Mr. Clinton walked from the aircraft to his waiting Marine One helicopter for the flight to the White House. He walked with his injured right leg stiff, but appeared to be putting only minimal weight on the cane.

He had used the cane as well to climb the steps of his

airplane when he departed Barbados earlier Monday.

White House spokeswoman Mary Ellen Glynn said earlier the president had conferred with his doctors and his physical therapist as well as Mrs. Clinton Sunday at poolside to discuss his condition.

Mr. Clinton used one of a pair of hand-carved, wooden canes given to him at the San Francisco Monastery in Tlalcala, Mexico, last week. He took a few steps with them when he received them and the canes had since been outfitted with rubber tips.

The cane's shaft has the Mexican symbol of an eagle with a snake in its mouth. The curved handle is a pander.

Mr. Clinton tore a tendon in his right knee during a

stumble at the Florida estate of golfer Greg Norman in the early hours of March 14. He underwent surgery the same day to repair it.

The president has suffered back pain in recent days and Ms. Glynn said doctors believed the crutches might have been a cause.

During his weekend in Barbados, Mr. Clinton got into the swimming pool for some physical therapy at the Heron Bay estate where he stayed. He set a grueling pace during the longest foreign trip he has taken since his knee surgery, but Ms. Glynn said one day of rest at poolside did much to rejuvenate him.

He still has several more months of rehabilitation before he can take up his favourite sports, jogging and golfing, again.

More peacekeepers may go to Bosnia for elections

WASHINGTON (R) — The NATO-led peacekeeping force in Bosnia could be temporarily increased by up to 3,000 troops in September to protect civilians voting in municipal elections, the alliance's European commander said Monday.

U.S. army Gen. George Joulwan, supreme allied commander of NATO forces in Europe, stressed to reporters that no decision had been made on any increase. There are now 31,000 troops from 34 nations in Bosnia, including 8,500 Americans.

"I hate to speculate until I know all the requirements, but we have looked at a range up to and including four to six battalions if it comes to that. But we are not at that stage yet," he said at a Pentagon news conference on the military mission in Bosnia.

"That may be upwards of, I would say, two or three thousand personnel. I am not sure how many Americans. It is a NATO commitment that we are talking about," Gen. Joulwan added.

Bosnia municipal elections, postponed several times, are now scheduled for Sept. 13-14. Gen. Joulwan said NATO was committed to helping the Organisation on Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to ensure that elections would be held in a stable atmosphere.

He said that the number of additional troops required would probably depend on whether tense areas such as Mostar and Brcko were included in the voting.

"We are very much involved," Gen. Joulwan said. "I am not sure what the commitments will be for the election, but we are also planning if need be to bring in additional forces if our commanders say that is required."

"We have already put an alert out to the nations and they are prepared if need be, if the assessment in September is there, to bring in additional forces."

Afghan Taliban protest non-invitation to summit

KABUL (R) — The Taliban administration in the Afghan capital Kabul protested Tuesday at being left out of a 10-country regional summit designed to improve economic ties.

A Taliban statement urged the secretary general of the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO) to review the policy of excluding the Taliban.

"The fifth summit of ECO member countries will be held without the participation of the real representatives of the Islamic state of Afghanistan, which will severely damage ECO's prestige," said a message from the Taliban-controlled Foreign Ministry to the secretary general of ECO.

"We ask you to review

your current policies as a non-political organisation," the message said.

The 10 members of the ECO are Turkey, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

The group is meeting in Ashgabat, capital of Turkmenistan, to discuss options for exporting Central Asia's huge oil and gas resources to the outside world.

The Taliban, who control two-thirds of Afghanistan, have yet to be recognised as the legitimate government by any nation or international body. A representative of the government ousted by the Taliban from Kabul last September has been invited to represent

Afghanistan at the Ashgabat conference.

One of the options under consideration by the conference is to build a gas pipeline through Afghanistan to the energy-hungry sub-continent.

The Afghan part of the proposed route is currently under the control of the Taliban.

Turkmenistan, which has most to gain if the proposed pipeline goes ahead, has performed a delicate balancing act between the conflicting priorities of its neighbours.

As the only Central Asian state to share a border with Taliban-controlled Afghanistan, Turkmenistan has been careful not to offend the purist militia.

The other four Central Asian states and Russia have held a number of meetings to come up with a co-ordinated policy to cope with what they perceive as the threat the Taliban would present should they succeed in taking the rest of the country.

The Taliban leadership have denied that they have any extra-territorial ambitions in Central Asia.

The Turkmen authorities have also cultivated ties with their other southern neighbour Iran, which the Taliban accuses of helping the Afghan opposition. The Iranians are keen to see the pipeline run through their territory.

Pakistan urges India to withdraw Kashmir troops

MALE, Maldives (R) — Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said Tuesday he was confident India would agree to discuss the future of divided Kashmir in bilateral talks, and urged India to withdraw troops from the Himalayan region.

Mr. Sharif told Reuters Television before leaving a regional summit in the Indian Ocean nation of the Maldives that he was satisfied with face-to-face talks Monday with his Indian counterpart, Inder Kumar Gujral.

"I think the situation has taken a good turn. We have held talks yesterday after a deadlock of four years. The talks were very constructive, very meaningful, and we've agreed to talk more," Mr. Sharif said on the tarmac of Male's airport before boarding his aircraft.

Mr. Sharif said the two countries' most senior diplomats would meet in

Islamabad next month and hopefully form working groups to discuss the issues dividing the two neighbours.

The Pakistani leader was asked if he agreed with his foreign minister, Gohar Ayub Khan, who Monday said the Indian army had "more or less gone berserk" in Jammu and Kashmir where Muslim guerrillas are fighting Indian rule.

"I did mention this point to the Indian prime minister," Mr. Sharif said. "I told him that the Indian government must consider withdrawing the troops or the paramilitary troops from Kashmir, and also at the same time pave the way for a dialogue between India and Pakistan."

Asked if one of the working groups should be devoted to the Kashmir issue, the Pakistani leader said: "Certainly, because Kashmir is the core issue, and we have

to address this issue very seriously."

Mr. Sharif, questioned over what would happen if India refused to discuss Kashmir in a working group, said: "I think they will listen to us."

The Pakistani leader was scheduled to fly to Iran to deliver financial aid to earthquake victims there, and then go to Turkmenistan later Tuesday for a regional summit.

At their 90-minute talks on a resort island in this tropical archipelago, Mr. Sharif and Mr. Gujral agreed their foreign secretaries would identify subjects to be discussed in the working groups.

Pakistan's foreign secretary, Shamshad Ahmad, said after the talks Monday that one of the working groups would be devoted to Kashmir — the cause of two of the three wars the two countries have fought since inde-

pendence in 1947.

But Indian Foreign Secretary Salman Haider later said no decision had yet been taken on the issues to be discussed.

Asked if one of the groups would tackle Kashmir, where Muslim guerrillas are fighting for autonomy or the transfer of Indian-ruled Kashmir to Pakistan, Mr. Sharif said:

"They will identify the subjects. The secretary-level talks will identify the areas where the working groups have to be formed."

Mr. Sharif said he was pleased that he and Mr. Gujral had agreed to set up a telephone hotline between them. "If I have any problem, I can pick up the phone and speak to him. If he has any problem, he can speak to me directly on the phone."

Asked if he would use the phone, he said: "Quite frequently."



President Bill Clinton, having cast away the crutches, uses a single cane as he walks with first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton across the South Lawn as they return to the White House Monday. The Clintons were returning from a week-long trip to Mexico, Costa Rica and Barbados (Reuters photo)



North Korean defectors wave to reporters at the western port of Incheon in South Korea Tuesday. The 14 defectors from two families could be the first to escape to South Korea directly from North Korea by boat (Reuters photo)

'Boat people' fears as N. Koreans land in South

SEOUL (R) — South Koreans Tuesday feared a mass influx of "boat people" from hungry North Korea after two families of 14 people made possibly the first direct escape by sea to the South.

But there was little to suggest that the well-fed and smartly-dressed defectors who stepped ashore at the western port city of Incheon heralded the start of a refugee crisis.

Defence Minister Kim Dong-Jin told a hastily-arranged cabinet meeting the flight was funded by a relative in the United States with a \$20,000 gift — \$5,500 of which was used to buy a boat that was laden with food and even boasted a portable telephone.

One media report said the 32-tonne craft was stocked with cartons of a popular South Korean cigarette.

South Koreans worry a collapse of the near-starving North could trigger a seaborne invasion of "boat people" similar to the Viet-

namese refugees who landed on Asian shores in a flotilla of vessels starting in the 1970s.

"Is this a signal for a mass exodus by sea?" asked the Dong-A Ilbo newspaper.

"What has added shock is the fact that they are the first 'boat people' to defect to South Korea."

By North Korean standards, the 14 asylum seekers were fabulously rich, and their journey was meticulously planned.

The \$20,000 was passed to one of the defectors at a meeting with the relative in China earlier this year, a Defence Ministry spokesman said.

South Korean naval officers who boarded the boat after it broke clear from a fleet of Chinese fishing smacks and made a dash for freedom found enough food to last several months, media reports said.

The boat was abandoned just South of a nautical demarcation line that has split the two Koreas since their

1950-53 war. The Northerners, who had shown a white flag to the boarding party, were ferried to Incheon on a navy vessel.

Captain Ahn Sun-Kook, 48, carried his mother on his back as he came ashore in a rain deluge early Tuesday. His wife, son and two daughters smiled brightly and waved to photographers.

"We came for freedom," said the boat's engineer Kim Won-Hyung, 57, whose family of eight included his two-year-old grandson, who looked healthy and plump despite food shortages gripping the North.

"If the information provided by the captain is true, it would be the first defection direct by sea from North Korea," said Korea maritime police spokesman Chung Moo-Chang.

According to some media accounts, the boat left a North Korean western river port near China carrying the captain and his family and

picked up the second family further down the coast before steaming into the Yellow Sea.

It outwitted North Korean naval patrol craft during the four-day voyage.

Several newspapers pointed out that North Korea is desperately short of fuel, and boats are not easily available, making mass flight by sea unlikely.

Growing numbers of North Koreans are risking their lives in search of rice and a better life. Until Monday, all had escaped across the heavily-mined land border with the South or through China, the most common jumping-off point.

The largest breakout was by a group of 17 — including 16 members of a single family — that arrived in South Korea last December after a six-week long epic escape through China.

Last month North Korea's former top ideologue, Hwang Jang-Yop, arrived in Seoul after a flight through Beijing and the Philippines.

'Rebels take key Zaire bridge'

KINSHASA (R) — Laurent Kabila's rebels have taken a key bridge on the road to Zaire's capital Kinshasa, reports reaching the city said Tuesday.

Zaireans from the region, in contact with residents there by radio, said government forces pulled back from the Kwango River Bridge about 180 kilometres by road from the capital Monday.

Information Minister Kin-Kicy Mulumba told Reuters he could make no immediate comment on the reports. On Monday, he told reporters there was fierce fighting in the region of Kenge, 60 kilometres to the east.

"The Armed Forces of Zaire (FAZ) abandoned the Kwango Bridge. We heard about it yesterday," one Zairian dignitary from the region told Reuters. "The army fell back to Mbakana, about 150 kilometres from Kinshasa."

The source said the rebels were not sticking to the main road. "Kabala's men are infiltrating the region. They are not using the paved road."

Mr. Mulumba said Monday after a special cabinet meeting that there had been violent fighting in the region of Kenge, which is 200 kilometres from Kinshasa as the crow flies and longer by road.

"The fighting is very violent," he told state radio. "The FAZ are busy main-

taining the front line and pushing it back."

The rebels, who admit facing stiff resistance, have been talking tough ahead of Wednesday talks between President Mobutu Sese Seko and Mr. Kabila.

Mr. Kabila says Mr. Mobutu must hand over power if he wants to avoid a battle for the capital.

South Africa's Deputy President Thabo Mbeki, who is trying to broker a peaceful solution, predicted 48 hours of diplomatic shuffling ahead of a meeting Wednesday between Mr. Kabila and Mr. Mobutu.

Mr. Mobutu's son and spokesman, Nzanga, told Belgian RTL-TV Television his father was ready to make serious concessions.

Mr. Kabila's son Joseph, commander of frontline units, told reporters at rebel headquarters in Lubumbashi that rebel forces were advancing on Kinshasa on all fronts.

"Mobutu has to go, to relinquish power...that is on Wednesday," Mr. Kabila told California-based Pacific Radio in a telephone interview on Monday.

(Mobutu) wanted eight days to think, to consult his people, and I think he has done it now. So we are going there, to proceed to the peaceful transfer of power from the dictatorship regime to the people of the alliance. I think that is the only thing we are expecting

at the Wednesday meeting."

Mr. Kabila said his alliance would not accept any kind of transition government suggested by Western powers or other mediators.

"(The Western powers) can't now come in, imposing a lot of conditions and choosing for our people who should be their leader again and again," said Mr. Kabila.

"They are trying to complicate (the situation) by machination, intrigue, so that the Mobutuists, the ones who have destroyed this country, remain in power without their boss Mobutu."

Mr. Mbeki said the meeting may prove a last chance for a negotiated solution.

He predicted intensive discussions between South African mediators and Mr. Kabila, Mr. Mobutu and various countries with an interest in ending the Zaire war.

Mr. Mbeki said he would probably travel to Zaire Tuesday to hold separate meetings with Mr. Kabila and Mr. Mobutu. He identified the main issues as composition of a transitional authority, a timetable for setting it up and the timing of Mr. Mobutu's resignation.

Mobutu supporters voted Saturday to give Archbishop Laurent Monsengwo back his old post as transitional parliament speaker, a job from which they helped

oust him in 1995.

Arch. Monsengwo has yet to say whether he will take the job, which would make him the constitutional successor to Mr. Mobutu in the event of death or incapacity and a key player in any transition.

Mr. Kabila's rebels, who took up arms in October in a dispute over Zairean nationality for ethnic Tutsis, control three-quarters of Africa's third largest country.

"The end should come very swiftly. I do not see the hold-out on Kinshasa lasting long. It will come in the next few days," Joseph Kabila said.

Mr. Mobutu, 66, who is suffering from cancer, has ruled Zaire since seizing power in 1965.

Asked if his father was ready to relinquish power to a transitional authority led by Arch. Monsengwo, Nzanga Mobutu replied: "It's too early for me to say that... everything depends on the negotiations. But the president is ready to make many concessions... serious concessions to end the present crisis."

The United States on Monday renewed pressure on Americans to leave Zaire. "Our message is clear as a bell to the American private community... Get out of Zaire before you find yourself in harm's way," State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said.

6 hurt as strong quake rattles Japan

FUKUOKA, Japan (R) — A strong earthquake measuring 6.1 on the Richter Scale shook southern Japan's Kyushu island Tuesday, causing minor damage and slightly injuring at least six people, authorities said.

The quake occurred at 2:38 p.m. (0538 GMT) and its epicentre near the town of Sendai in Kagoshima prefecture in the southern part of the island, the Meteorological Agency said.

Sendai is about 985 kilometres southwest of Tokyo.

The tremor registered a six on the Japanese scale of seven, a level defined as "violent" and capable of causing landslides, opening cracks in the ground and making houses collapse.

A spokesman at Sendai Town Hall said two people were slightly hurt in the town when the roof of a makeshift store collapsed.

A 62-year-old woman in a village near the town suffered a broken ankle and three other people in nearby villages were taken to hospital for minor injuries, he said.

Railway authorities ordered all services halted on Kyushu.

"Drawers popped out of desks and big television sets moved from their positions," said the Sendai spokesman. "But other than that, it looks normal."

The tremor caused no tidal waves, the Meteorological Agency said.

The quake could be clearly felt in Fukuoka, a city about 200 kilometres from Sendai, which was hosting the final day of the annual meeting of the Asian Development Bank.

The meeting was attended by 3,000 delegates, including senior finance officials from all over Asia.

An even bigger earthquake, registering 6.2 on the Richter Scale, struck Sendai on March 26, and the area had been experiencing several minor aftershocks from the March tremor, the Meteorological Agency said. The earlier earthquake caused no damage.

Chechen president meets Russian hostage relatives

MOSCOW (R) — The president of Chechnya met relatives of Russians kidnapped in the breakaway region at an encounter hosted by the secretary of Russia's Security Council Tuesday, a council spokesman said.

Chechen leader Aslan Maskhadov was expected to leave Moscow shortly afterwards. On Monday, he signed a peace accord in the Kremlin with Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

Mr. Maskhadov met Security Council Secretary Ivan Rybkin and relatives of four Russian journalists seized in March, the spokesman said.

Chechen bandits have seized a number of Russian and foreign journalists. The latest incident happened

Saturday when a Russian television crew was kidnapped.

The Chechen leadership has condemned the kidnappings and promised to bring those responsible to justice, but local law enforcement officials have had few successes to date.

A number of people have been freed, often amid controversy over whether ransoms were paid to their captors.

The kidnappings are the latest irritant in relations between Moscow and Chechnya, which Monday both promised an end to 400 years of intermittent conflict.

The deal aims to turn last year's ceasefire between Moscow and the separatist

region into a lasting peace.

The truce had halted a 21-month war in the predominantly Muslim region in which tens of thousands of people died. It included the withdrawal of Russian troops and the deferral of any decision on Chechen sovereignty until 2001.

Russian newspapers Tuesday noted that the latest peace treaty left the question of Chechnya's sovereignty unclear.

Mr. Maskhadov has insisted on full independence from Russia. The treaty said relations between the region and Moscow would be in accordance with "norms of international law" but the Kremlin insisted there was still no question of Chechnya seceding.

Russia talks tough before visit by NATO leader

MOSCOW (R) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin has told his top negotiator to take a tough line in talks with NATO Tuesday, despite signs that Moscow may be ready to sign a security agreement with the Western defence alliance on May 27.

ITAR-TASS news agency said Mr. Yeltsin had instructed Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov Monday to take a firm line in defending Russia's interests at Tuesday's talks in Moscow with NATO Secretary General Javier Solana.

"The president confirmed the foreign minister's mandate for the talks" and noted

the need to continue the firm Russian line, based on defending the country's interests especially on the bloc of military questions," TASS said, quoting Presidential Press Secretary Sergei Yastuzhensky.

Some Kremlin sources say Russia has already decided to sign a deal in Paris on May 27 but intends to keep up the uncertainty and anti-NATO rhetoric until the last minute to appease domestic opponents who fear Russia is selling out its national interests.

Mr. Yeltsin has also started what the Kremlin says will be several days of tele-

phone diplomacy with NATO leaders. He spoke to French President Jacques Chirac Monday and the Kremlin said Tuesday he planned to make more calls later in the day.

The Moscow-NATO deal is aimed at overcoming Russia's strong objections to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's (NATO) plans to expand to take in new members from the former Soviet Bloc.

Mr. Solana, who last met Mr. Primakov in Luxembourg last week, was due to arrive in Moscow Tuesday afternoon and did not plan to meet reporters.

The main disagreements over a deal which would set out a new relationship between NATO and Russia include Moscow's demands for written guarantees that the alliance will not move its military might into new member states.

Invitations to new NATO members are due to go out at an alliance summit in Madrid in July.

Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic are thought to be the leading contenders to join NATO, but Romania and Slovenia also hope to be in the first wave of new members.

Navy nuclear sub shows British might in H. Kong

HONG KONG (R) — A Royal Navy nuclear-powered submarine berthed in Hong Kong Tuesday in one of the last shows of British military might before the territory's handover to China in seven weeks.

The port visit by HMS Trenchant was the latest in a flurry of British naval movements in the area ahead of the sovereignty transfer, an event that will bring down the curtain on the last Asian outpost of Britain's shrivelled empire.

After the flag change, it might be a long time before British warships visit Hong Kong — no agreement for naval port calls after the handover has been agreed yet with China.

British Armed Forces spokeswoman Ruth Vernon said the Trenchant's visit was a routine recreation call and had no special military or muscle-flexing significance. The submarine will also replenish provisions.

"Hong Kong has always been a place for them to come for rest and recreation," Ms. Vernon told Reuters.

The Trenchant, a Trafalgar class, nuclear-powered submarine commissioned in 1989, is participating in a major Royal Navy task force deployed to the Asia Pacific region in the months preceding the handover.

The "Ocean Wave" Task Force of a dozen warships is led by the aircraft carrier HMS Illustrious, and is assisting in the phased British military withdrawal from Hong Kong.

The ships will escort her to the British throne Prince Charles and colonial Governor Chris Patten when they sail out of Hong Kong aboard the royal yacht Britannia on July 1, moments after a spectacular harbour-front handover ceremony.

The Trenchant was the first submarine in the navy fitted with Spearfish, a new generation of high-speed, anti-submarine, gas-turbine-powered conventional torpedoes. "She is not equipped with nuclear weapons," a military spokesman said.

Because of its large size, the Trenchant berthed in the deep Western anchorage well away from the city but within view of the many commuter ferries that scuttle around Hong Kong waters.

The submarine was accompanied into Hong Kong by the auxiliary ship diligence, which saw action in the 1982 Falklands War against Argentina and the 1991 Gulf War against Iraq.

have visited Hong Kong recently. The frigate Chatham will remain as a communications centre for the final withdrawal.

The United States recently clinched a deal with China on U.S. Navy visits to Hong Kong after 1997. The U.S. Navy is the most frequent naval user of Hong Kong's facilities.

China has agreed to let the U.S. visits continue, but the future of British visits remain under a question mark.

"We're busy negotiating on the same lines and hopefully we'll get a similar result," Ms. Vernon said.

In a sign of Britain's shrinking global military power, the Royal Navy's last base in the Far East, the HMS Tamar in Hong Kong, was shut down last month ahead of the handover.

Britain has also closed its air force base and moved its last remaining military aircraft, six aging Wessex helicopters, to the civilian airport. It plans to sell them to Uruguay.

Britain's three naval patrol vessels stationed in Hong Kong — HMS Plover, Starling and Peacock — are also being sold off to the Philippines in the drawdown.

Chinese warships could soon be a familiar sight in Hong Kong. China plans to move into a new naval facility on Stonecutters Island in the middle of Hong Kong harbour when the People's Liberation Army takes over defence duties from Britain.

Meanwhile, controversial amendments to Hong Kong civil liberties laws are expected to be submitted Saturday for approval by the territory's future interim legislature, a spokesman for the chamber said Tuesday.

The proposed amendments, which restrict demonstrations and ban overseas funding of political parties, have drawn a storm of protest from Hong Kong's active pro-democracy lobby and the outgoing British colonial administration.

The democracy lobby plans to contest in court any laws passed by the China-installed Provisional Legislature, arguing that the body itself is unconstitutional.

The final details of the amendments are expected to be fine-tuned by future Hong Kong leader Tung Chee-hwa's inner cabinet Tuesday.

If all goes according to plan, they will be published Thursday ahead of the Provisional Legislature's meeting Saturday.

Sri Lankan army launches major offensive against rebels in north

COLOMBO (R) — Sri Lankan troops, backed by tanks and artillery, launched a major offensive against separatist Tamil rebels in the north of the island Tuesday, military officials said.

"Troops have launched the offensive. They have begun to move towards the LTTE-controlled areas in the north," a military official in the north told Reuters.

Aid workers confirmed troops had moved north from bases in Vavuniya, 220 kilometres north of the capital Colombo, towards the rebel-held Wanni region.

A military spokesman in Colombo declined to comment on the offensive, saying details of troop movements were just beginning to reach the capital.

Military officials said large numbers of troops, backed by air force helicopter gunships and tanks, were taking part in the offensive. It is aimed at opening a land route linking Vavuniya and the Jaffna peninsula, about 100 kilometres further north.

The military currently relies entirely on air and sea transport to send troops and supplies to bases in Jaffna as most of the north central

Wanni region, north of Vavuniya, is under rebel control.

Spokesmen for the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) were not immediately available for comment. But the rebels said earlier they were prepared to face the offensive.

The LTTE has been fighting for 13 years for an independent homeland for minority Tamils in the north and east of Sri Lanka, which is predominantly Sinhalese.

The government says more than 50,000 people have died in the conflict, but the LTTE says the toll is even higher.

Planes diverted as Mexican volcano spews ash

MEXICO CITY (R) — Mexico's Popocatepetl Volcano blew a huge cloud of hot ash into the air in one of its most intense eruptions since the giant volcano rumbled to life three years ago, officials said Monday.

Nearby residents said the ground shook briefly while the 5,465 metre volcano, the sixth tallest in North America, sent flaming rocks and ash several kilometres in the air.

No one died or was injured in the explosion late Sunday, one of the most violent since the volcano suddenly began spewing hot gas and ash into the air in mid-1994 after decades of relative silence.

Ash fell on houses and cars as far away as the Western port city of Veracruz, some 230 kilometres west of the volcano's snow-capped crater.

Television reports late

Monday said Mexico's Transport Ministry has warned aircraft not to fly within 16 kilometres of the volcano's crater, for fear that ash could affect engine parts.

The ash cloud fell so thickly on the flanks of the volcano that visibility was reduced to 50 metres, according to officials. People woke in the night from the noise of the hot ash raining down, believing it was hailstones.

Officials said Monday the risk of a major eruption was small and there was no reason to evacuate hundreds of small villages that dot the mountain's flanks. Millions more people live in the nearby cities of Mexico City and Puebla.

"This activity is consistent with what we have seen in the past few years and fortunately there is no need for evacuation," Servando

De La Cruz, a volcanologist who advises the National Centre for Disaster Prevention (CENAPRED), told a news conference.

Popocatepetl settled into silence Monday. Mr. De La Cruz said the volcano remained fundamentally stable, periodically releasing giant "puffs" of gases and smaller amounts of magma, or lava, that build up inside the mountain.

"It is like a pressure cooker. As long as the pressure finds a way to get out the mountain looks dramatic, but poses little risk," Mr. De La Cruz told Reuters.

Popocatepetl, whose name means "smoking mountain" in the Nahuatl language, is one of the world's most active volcanoes. Its last major eruption was in 1720, although it has since shown signs of life in 1802-1804 and from 1919-1927, according to scientists.

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Fair treatment

THE RECENT report from the U.S. that a combination of drugs might successfully be used to combat the AIDS virus was not as promising as it first appeared. Even though the "cocktail" of medicines when taken simultaneously has succeeded in arresting the advance of AIDS and caused its remission, the exuberant cost of the medicine makes it inaccessible to the most vulnerable peoples of the world.

With the majority of the cases of AIDS infections occurring in the developing countries, most if not all of the affected people would remain unable to make use of the recent scientific advances to treat this deadly disease.

The ongoing World Health Organisation (WHO) conference in Geneva could be the right forum to address the poor's inaccessibility to effective medicines to combat AIDS. According to WHO norms as well as all the human rights standards as codified in various treaties and conventions, the right to life should not be confined only to the privileged. Rather, all children, men and women, irrespective of their economic condition, should enjoy the right to life by having access to medical treatment of epidemics and illnesses. It is simply unfair that only the rich can afford the kind of effective treatment for killer diseases. That is why the recent breakthrough in the treatment of AIDS should be expanded to make it within the reach of all peoples across the globe through the manufacture of low-cost medicines that the peoples of the less developed countries can afford.

WHO has a rare occasion to seize upon last week's medical discovery to promote its widespread use by adopting a solemn declaration that all medicines that could make the difference between life and death should be made available to the poor as well as the rich.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER for Al Ra'i Tuesday criticised the Ministry of Health's measures concerning the medical examination of non-Jordanian workers employed in the country. A new order to Jordan is normally given a period of three months, during which he should undergo an AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome) test to prove that he or she does not carry the HIV virus, said Fathi Kassar. The writer said that during the three-month period, before giving the laboratory a sample of blood for testing, the worker is liable to infect many people in the country. The worker can also leave the country within that three-month period without undergoing an AIDS test, and so there is no way of finding out whether the virus has been contracted by other people or of knowing if the worker was a carrier of the disease or not, according to the writer. He asked why such blood test cannot be conducted in the first 10 days of the worker's arrival in Jordan, so as to avert any risk of having the disease spread in the Kingdom. He said that the health authorities should promptly do something about this system to ensure safety for the Jordanians.

A WRITER for Al Ra'i said in an article published Tuesday that President Clinton has far exceeded all former U.S. presidents in currying favour to the Zionists and has gone beyond all limits in pledging full American support for the Israeli acts of terrorism against the Palestinians. Hosni Ayesh said that while the former presidents used to say that the Israeli demographic and topographic changes in the occupied Arab lands, including Jerusalem, are illegal and violate the U.N. resolutions and international law, Mr. Clinton considers the occupied Palestinian lands as disputed territories. Furthermore, Mr. Clinton, who witnesses Israel's continued drive to build settlements on Arab lands and the demolition of Arab houses, does not consider this practice as an act of terrorism but rather he maintains that the Palestine authority is responsible for Israel's security. He said it is most astonishing and frustrating to see the head of the most powerful nation on earth, which is claiming to be brokering peace in the Middle East, encouraging the oppressors and the aggressors to pursue their atrocities against the Palestinian people.

The Washington Watch

'Politics in the U.S. makes governing difficult and establishing a national consensus almost an impossibility'

THE EVER-expanding campaign finance scandal (now threatening to engulf both U.S. political parties) and the recently completed budget agreement continue to dominate the news in Washington. But under the surface there are signs of the beginning of the national elections for the year 2000.

Revelations, last week, of Chinese and other foreign money bailing out the Republican Party in 1994 have served to establish that the campaign finance scandal is now a bi-partisan affair. Whether the parties' leadership will recognise this and work together to admit their misdeeds, punish wrongdoers and move towards bi-partisan reform remains to be seen. For the time being, both Democrats and Republicans seem content with merely hurling accusations at one another. And the end is not yet in sight.

It is somewhat ironic that in the face of the partisan campaign finance wars, the White House and the Republican congressional leadership worked out a tentative agreement to produce a balanced budget for 1998.

While the details of this agreement remain to be worked out, and may yet produce a bitter political battle, for now both sides have secured enough compromise from each other to announce agreement and victory.

Behind the scenes of these two unfolding developments, however, is yet another story in the making — and that is the 2000 elections. This struggle is taking place both between the two parties and within each party.

Despite the fact that both Republicans and

Democrats won significant victories in 1996, the elections did little to resolve historic debates both within and between the parties.

Republicans maintained control of the Congress for only the second time in this century and Bill Clinton's reelection made him the first Democrat to accomplish that feat in 60 years. Nevertheless, today both parties are in disarray. Both are in debt (although the Democrat's debt is clearly the biggest of the two), and both parties are facing serious internal battles for leadership and direction. Victories were won, but little else was decided in 1996.

By campaigning as a non-traditional Democrat, Bill Clinton was able to forge an electoral coalition that included both traditional Democratic voting groups (trade union members, African Americans, Hispanics and women) and strong support from groups that had not voted Democratic for over two decades (Catholics and middle class white ethnics).

While it was possible for the president to create the political themes that brought together such a coalition in an election campaign, it is more difficult to hold together such a coalition while enacting specific policies while governing. Already there are signs of stress showing between the president's centrist policies and the demands of the traditional Democratic voting groups.

Republicans, heady from their victory in 1994, faced much the same stress in 1996. It was easier for them to run and win on an ideological headline programme in the 1994 congressional elections. In 1996, they found it difficult

to shed the politics that worked in the congressional races and develop a more centrist agenda necessary to win a national presidential race. Each time the leading Republican candidate would reach out to new voter groups the Republicans needed to win at the national level, their right-wing traditional base voter groups would threaten to rebel.

The Democrats will face their first test this year when trying to build support for the president's budget compromise with the Republicans. Already there are signs that some key Democratic congressional leaders will not easily fall in line.

House Democratic leader Dick Gephardt, who most likely will challenge Vice-President Al Gore for the presidential nomination in 2000, has not endorsed the agreement. Gore, of course, will be called upon to sell the White House proposals. But because the compromise makes cuts in some social programmes (although it does preserve many and even restores some which were cut from the last budget), and provides some tax cuts favoured by Republicans, the plan is sure to spark some opposition from traditional Democrats.

Gephardt, who has been championing these key Democratic voter groups, may seek to exploit their anger to support his bid for leadership.

But Gephardt will not be alone. African Americans, angry at this year's cuts in social programmes, labour unions and liberal groups disenchanted with White House compromises during the past four years will be looking for leadership to champion their causes in

2000. Gore has also been identified with these causes and has addressed many of these groups during the past few months. But he now faces the dilemma of keeping the support of these traditional Democrats while, at the same time, supporting his White House and protecting the broad coalition-building effort that won the White House in 1996 and may be needed to win it again in 2000.

Challenging both Gore and Gephardt from even further to the left of the Democratic Party may be Senator Paul Wellstone, a two-term liberal Senator from Minnesota, or Reverend Jesse Jackson who has twice before run for the presidency.

While most analysts still believe that Vice-President Gore remains the favourite to win the Democratic nomination in 2000, it is clear that a challenge from the traditional wing of the party can be damaging. It can harm the administration's efforts to pass critical legislation now, since liberals in the president's party are determined to be more assertive. It can also threaten to break up the new coalition that brought Democrats to the White House in 1992 and 1996.

The picture is no rosier on the Republican side. With Bob Dole in retirement, the party lacks leadership. House speaker Newt Gingrich has been wounded by ethics problems and is now being challenged from the right within the congressional Republican caucus.

The new chair of the Republican Party is a relative unknown party activist who lacks charisma. And even Senate Leader Trent

Lott is looked upon as lacking in the stature and leadership qualities of his predecessors.

There are Republicans waiting to run in the year 2000, but many of them have run and lost before (like their Democratic counterparts most of whom failed in presidential bids in 1988 or 1992 or 1996). And so far, even the new candidates who have been suggested may not be able to fuse together the deep divisions that cost the Republicans victories in the last two national elections.

The "traditional morality" wing of the party (represented by Pat Buchanan and the Christian coalition) and the more socially liberal but fiscally conservative wing of the party (represented by Jack Kemp and Steve Forbes) continue to be on a collision course with each other.

Despite the unfolding scandals and the hard work that remains to be done to craft a budget, during the past month, a half dozen leading Republicans and Democrats have travelled to New Hampshire and Iowa (homes of the earliest presidential contests) to test the waters for possible campaigns in 2000.

These and the other aspiring candidates (who now number more than a dozen) are already working at crafting their campaigns. And their responses to each other and to the challenges that face their parties and the country in the next four years will increasingly be shaped by their political aspirations. In a real sense, politics in the U.S. is a never ending campaign. It makes governing difficult and establishing a national consensus almost an impossibility.

LETTERS

No comparison stands

To the Editor:

THE ARTICLE "Jinnah and Denktash, fathers of their nations, were only very partially successful" written by G. H. Jansen, (Jordan Times, May 10, 1997) gave me a sudden jolt as soon as my eyes fell upon the title: the text did not relieve either my shock or my surprise. To me it was a remarkable attempt at mental acrobatics to compare Mohammed Ali Jinnah and Rauf Denktash in the same breath.

I have met Mr. Denktash a number of times in New York when I served in our mission to the United Nations and as he was slightly before my time. I never met the founder of Pakistan, but I know enough about him to state quite categorically that the two personalities cannot be called similar by any stretch of imagination.

I do not know if Mr. Jansen is aware of the vast literature on the subject of Jinnah and the Pakistani movement. My own personal library here in Amman has more than 500 books on this topic, and the literature on it runs into several thousand. It seems that Mr. Jansen is not fully aware of either the life or the work of Mohammed Ali Jinnah.

Yes, Jinnah was responsible to a large extent for the partition of the Indian subcontinent. However, the very partition is neither good nor bad. A recent example is the break-up of the Soviet Union and the independence of the

Central Asian Republics, which is, all will agree, a good development. Or the break-off of Czechoslovakia into Czech and Slovak republics.

Second, the Indian subcontinent has always been characterised by a random mix of states, kingdoms and varied entities rather than by unity. Only three times in 5,000 years of history has India been more or less a unity: during the Asoka empire, in the pre-Christian era, during the Mughal empire, from the thirteenth to the eighteenth century, and during the British empire, from that time until 1947.

Consequently, the birth of Pakistan and indeed the birth of Bangladesh, has been a return to the norm rather than a deviation from it.

Third, the creation of Pakistan was based on the two-nation theory which still holds good despite the separation of Pakistan and Bangladesh, as Bangladesh has discovered that it has far more in common with Pakistan than with India. Jinnah had proclaimed in 1934 in the Lahore session of the Pakistan Muslim League the following:

"The Hindus and Muslims belong to two different religious philosophies, social customs, literatures. They neither inter-marry nor inter-dine together and, indeed, they belong to two different civilisations... Their concepts on life and of life are different. It is quite clear that Hindus and Muslims derive their inspiration

from different sources of history. They have different epics, different heroes and different episodes... To yoke together two such nations under a single state, one as a numerical minority and the other as a majority, must lead to growing discontent and final destruction of any fabric that may be so built up for the government of such a state..."

Pakistan's creation was one of the major events of the twentieth century and even if Mr. Jinnah (as alleged by Mr. Jansen) was not very nice to the press, his achievements should not be underrated or trivialised or sneered at by a mere columnist. In any case, Jinnah's achievement was not a single-handed feat, as some people seem to believe, it was the culmination of the struggle of an entire nation for the fulfilment of its aspirations.

As regards northern Cyprus, the situation clearly does not stand comparison with that of the Indian subcontinent in the last phase of the British Raj. In any case, I do not wish to comment upon it as I do not know enough of the subject. But I also know that, irrespective of what Mr. Jansen says, history will take its course.

Ali Sarwar Naqvi,
Ambassador of Pakistan,
Amman.

Grassroots action needed

To the Editor:

PLUS ÇA change, plus c'est la même chose. Very wise French words, totally applicable to the Arab stance to Zionism-cum-Israel: Jews act and Arabs react, regardless of changing circumstances.

I particularly think of the latest Turkish-Israeli military agreements and exchange of information which give both sides a clear military advantage over Syrian and Iraqi armed forces, especially in the air. So what did we Arabs do? We most certainly protested vociferously and will probably go on doing so for a while longer, until the concerned Arab capitals receive carefully worded, cleverly ambiguous letters of assurance from Washington and the whole affair will be gradually forgotten, leaving the Arabs on the losing side, once again.

The most exasperating aspect of this issue is the fact that it clearly reflects the complete absence of any Arab plan of action, be it military, diplomatic or even popular, to counter the Zionist-Israeli plans against Palestine and

the Arab Nation which, after a complete century of Jewish planning, action and Arab inaction, resulted in the loss of Palestine and the no-peace, no-war situation that we witness today, with Israel taking everything and the Arabs losing everything.

What can we Arabs do? We could begin by buying influence in the U.S. Congress: it has been done before, especially when anti-Iraq money turned each and every member on the Hill into a personal enemy of Saddam Hussein.

Or, since the collective Arab regimes have not achieved any success in dealing with the Arab-Israeli conflict, it is time for the masses to take the initiative. One glance at the volume of Arab-American business reflects a clear American advantage in the balance of trade between them, whether in the diversity of commodities we import, or the preferential price of oil which, contrary to every other commodity in the world, did not rise for a quarter of a century. Without creating embarrassing diplomatic crises, or reverting to vio-

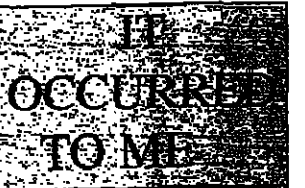
lence out of despair, the Arabs, as individuals can, as of today, begin to boycott anything American, from American bubble gum to American cars, or even boarding American-built aircraft.

This can be achieved through mounting a well-studied campaign aimed at creating total popular awareness, led by political parties — wherever legal — and parliaments — wherever effective. Failing both, the campaign could be carried out through trade unions, chambers of commerce and industry, newspapers, even charitable societies.

When American export figures to the Arab World drop, unemployment follows, constituents will pressure their representatives on the Hill, and that is when we could expect a change of attitude from 1,500 Pennsylvania Ave.

Then, probably only then, bulldozers will stop carving up Abu Ghneim.

Mohammad Azoka,
Amman.



The several ages of Eve

By Ali Kassay

WHEN DOES a woman become of age? This is a normal question which, in most countries, would receive a simple answer. Generally the answer refers to the time when a woman becomes entitled to vote, enter into legal contracts and, in general, becomes a citizen responsible for herself. Moreover, the age at which a woman accedes to these rights tends to be the same for the man.

In Jordan, however, things are a little bit more complex than that. When the question was posed in the course of a general discussion not very long ago, a lawyer present immediately asked: "Of age to do what?"

Naturally, all people present thought that this was a joke and they responded with as much or as little chuckling as they thought the retort was worth, or as much as they received from this lawyer the joke that was not very funny.

However, he stood his ground and assured the party that his question was not intended by the way of airy persiflage. In Jordan, the law appears, if I understood clearly, to define several ages of maturity for woman, depending on the act that she contemplates.

It all starts in the period between the age of fourteen and eighteen, when boys as well as girls are still considered minors, but they are allowed to enter into contracts. Such contracts are honoured by court if they serve the interests of the child, and annulled if the court considers them harmful to the child's interests. Such protection of the interests of children, which was news to me, is worthy of the highest admiration.

However, one ought to be specific. You see, this is the case in civil law, which is not the only code of law in the realm. Civil status matters follow the Shari'a, or Islamic law, and there are times when the two are not compatible. For instance, halfway through this period, at the age of sixteen, Shari'a considers a woman mature enough to sign her life away in a marriage contract, which is independent of the civil law, and therefore it is not revocable if it is found injurious to her interests. To compound the confusion, there is such a thing as 'urf, or custom and tradition, and then there is tribal law, which was officially annulled in the seventies in a brave attempt to streamline the law, but it continues to supersede civil law effectively.

Then the question poses itself, when does the civil status law consider a woman to be an independent citizen, in the sense of not having to be appended onto a male relative's family book? The answer is, never. At birth she becomes an entry in her father's family book, where she remains (even after his death) until such time as she is married, whereupon she becomes an entry in her husband's family book. In case of divorce, she returns to the family book of her father or, should he be deceased, that of another male relative.

Another question that presents itself is, at what age does the law give women the right to life? Well it does not. At least not in the absolute, since a woman's life is conditional on the approval of her behaviour by all her male relatives. Should any one of them consider her comportment remiss, he has the right to kill her in a crime of honour which receives a very light prison sentence or even a reprimand, as well as the approbation of society. Just as well I was born a man, I suppose.

Australian team's research may push back urbanism's beginnings by a millennium

By Rami G. Khouri
Special to the Jordan Times

The following is the first of two articles on the Teleilat Ghassul settlement, a Chalcolithic village that proves and challenges scholarly "urban" culture beliefs:

THE LATEST excavations at Teleilat Ghassul, in the arid zone northeast of the Dead Sea in the Jordan Valley, have revealed important new information about the very large farming village that flourished there for over a thousand years during the Chalcolithic period (c. 4500-3600 BC). More significantly, the Teleilat Ghassul dig may also challenge the accepted scholarly belief that "urban" culture in the Levant started in the Early Bronze Age, around 3600 BC, when walled towns first appear in the archaeological record.

Three seasons of excavations since 1994, headed by a University of Sydney (Australia) team directed

by Dr. Stephen Bourke, have shown that the ancient village was much larger, more complex and more densely and continuously inhabited than previously thought. They also confirmed that many key attributes of urbanism — minus only writing and town walls — certainly existed at the site a thousand years before the Early Bronze Age.

Teleilat Ghassul ("the small mounds of Ghassul", reflecting the site's terrain) is unknown to non-archaeologists mainly because it was within a closed-off military minefield for many decades before the 1994 Jordan-Israel peace treaty made it accessible. It has also been well preserved for the same reason: the main threat it faces today is the slow encroachment of irrigated eggplant fields.

The 1994-1997 excavations follow three pioneering digs at Teleilat Ghassul earlier this century — in 1929-38 by Pontifical Biblical Institute (Rome and

Jerusalem) teams headed by A. Mallon and R. Koepel and, in 1960, by R. North, and again in 1967 and 1975-77 by a University of Sydney team headed by Dr J.B. Hennessy. Those campaigns identified the farming and livestocking village's long, unbroken history over nearly two-thousand years — from the Late Neolithic to the end of the Chalcolithic era, roughly spanning the period 5500-3700 BC. The Late Neolithic ("new stone" age) settlement (c. 5500-4500 BC) comprised semi-subterranean, oval or circular pit houses. This culture evolved naturally and in place into the Chalcolithic ("copper-stone") culture.

The Chalcolithic village was characterised by rectangular, stone-and-mud-brick domestic quarters and crafts buildings, a major temple complex, multi-coloured wall paintings, child burials beneath plastered house floors and sophisticated pottery and chipped stone tools. The excavators earlier this cen-



The newly discovered stone-paved walkway linking the Chalcolithic era altar-like structure at top of photo with the previously known sanctuary temple

tury identified at least ten distinct building phases over the life of the settlement, each rebuilding phase perhaps prompted by destruction due to earthquakes in this active seismic zone.

The 1997 excavations by Dr. Bourke's team unearthed more cultic and domestic facilities, including an impressive, 18x7-metre typical late Chalcolithic longhouse with associated ceramics and stone tools. On the east side of the settlement they uncovered a longhouse complex with associated storage facilities. Among the highlights of the material remains recovered this year was a mudstone stamp seal, a lead/haematite macehead or weight, and a mother-of-pearl necklace. One small room that may have served as funerary functions contained two miniature ceramic vessels associated with at least two small child burials.

Latest findings

This year's excavations were noteworthy for three reasons. First, they confirmed the large size and long duration of the ancient village. Some areas of the central mound were excavated to six metres in depth, representing uninterrupted ancient habitation over nearly 1,500 years. The site is now known to have been much bigger than first assumed, and to

have expanded steadily and incrementally throughout its existence, rather than expanding abruptly during one phase of its life. Dr. Bourke said in a recent interview here with the Jordan Times. It probably started as a Chalcolithic era village of some five hectares around 4500 BC, expanded to nearly 10 hectares by 4000 BC, and reached its maximum size of some 25 hectares during the classic Ghassulian cultural period, around 3900-3800 BC.

"We can see clearly that the mechanisms of control and prosperity were in place in the village very early in its life, probably at the very beginning of the Chalcolithic period," Dr. Bourke said.

Second, the latest excavations discovered an altar-like structure and a paved pathway linking it with the two previously known sanctuaries, "confirming that the three cultic structures shared a common history of reconstruction," Dr. Bourke explained. The temple temenos, or sacred precinct, wall appears to have eroded away on two sides. There is now firm evidence of three distinct rebuilding phases over more than 500 years in this "sacred" area, confirming the long-term, "Egyptian-length," duration of cultic activity within the ancient settlement.

Third, the excavations revealed clear evidence of

inter-regional trade at the end of the Chalcolithic period, which had only been hinted at during previous digs. Such evidence includes alabaster maceheads (probably from Egypt), greenstone amulets, ivory, serpentine faience beads, basalt implements from the north Jordan Valley, and phosphorite bowls from the Wadi Fara' region (east of Nablus, in the Jordan Valley).

These findings, Dr. Bourke says, show that most major attributes of "urban" culture existed at Teleilat Ghassul for one thousand years before the Early Bronze Age, notably crafts specialisation, social stratification, sustained cultic centres and inter-regional trade and interaction. They also challenge scholars "to reassess the accepted dichotomy that Chalcolithic means a simple village culture, while Early Bronze reflects a more complex society."

He also suggests that the advent of town walls may not necessarily represent prosperity or a major civilisational advance, given that town walls may signal troubled times that require innovative defensive measures.

Why did Ghassul die out?

A lingering mystery that has not been cleared up is why the Ghassulian culture

suddenly disappeared, given the lack of any evidence of a destructive or catastrophic end to the settlement, such as war, earthquake or dead bodies. "Flint tools, pottery and other domestic materials on house floors across the site heighten the impression of a hasty or unplanned final abandonment of the settlement," Dr. Bourke said. Also, the village did not slowly shrink over time, as the periphery of the settlement was neither abandoned nor characterised by lower quality buildings. Something — an Egyptian attack? — seems to have caused the villagers one day to flee, leaving everything as it was on a typical day in their life, and never to return.

One theory for Ghassul's demise that Dr. Bourke is exploring is that the population, having become economically dependent on trade with Egypt, suffered major economic problems when those links were disrupted in the late Chalcolithic/Early Bronze Age era, after Egypt invaded and subjugated Palestine and the southern Levant and changed the nature of Egypt's economic requirements from the Ghassulians. The loss of trade with Egypt could have been a key reason for the decline and eventual disappearance of the Ghassulian culture.

Another possible cause of Ghassul's demise is that the

climate became drier and eroded the settlement's agricultural and livestock economy. A third, more complex, possible explanation is that "growing particularism" led to distinct sub-regional cultures at Chalcolithic settlements such as those known at Ghassul and at the north Jordan Valley sites of Pella, Tell Abu Hamid and Tell Shuna North, among others. As local cultures developed greater consciousness of their own identity and of what differentiated them from "the other", Dr. Bourke explains, it is possible that a contraction of intellectual horizons along with lower levels of regional trade and other contacts contributed to an insular existence and a withering of the settlement's former vitality.

The excavations will continue in the coming years, focusing on further deep probes in some areas and initial exploration of the southern side of the site. The work is being undertaken in cooperation with the Department of Antiquities of Jordan, whose Salt office representative, Saad Hadidi, worked with the Australian team. Funding for the excavations has come from the University of Sydney and the Australian Research Council, and logistical support in Jordan was provided by the British Institute at Amman for Archaeology and History.



The stone foundations of a Late Chalcolithic house reemerge into the light of day during the 1997 excavations by an Australian team at Teleilat Ghassul. It is to be noted that the Chalcolithic remains are near to the current surface of the ground (Photos by Rami G. Khouri)

Israel's ambassador resigns...

(Continued from page 1)

foreign ministry over who is in charge of foreign policy.

Foreign ministry officials have complained in the past that they were kept out of the circle of decision makers on important foreign policy questions, including Mideast peace talks, AP said.

"The Aqaba meeting was intended to be a secret meeting between the prime minister, King Hussein and Crown Prince Hassan in order to end the crisis between the countries on the water issue," Mr. Netanyahu's spokesman Shai Bazak said in a statement.

"The matter was not intended to circumvent the foreign ministry or the embassy, but rather to solve a specific problem directly by the prime minister and King Hussein," he said.

David Bar-Ilan, a senior adviser to Mr. Netanyahu, said Foreign Minister David Levy was informed ahead of time of the prime minister's plans to meet with King Hussein last week, and that it

was Mr. Levy's duty to inform Mr. Eran.

Mr. Levy and Mr. Netanyahu were to meet later Tuesday to discuss Mr. Eran's resignation, Israel Radio said.

The foreign ministry confirmed Tuesday that Mr. Eran submitted his resignation, but would not comment further. Sources at the Israeli embassy in Amman said Mr. Eran tendered his resignation two days earlier on Sunday.

Mr. Eran assumed his duties in Amman last Monday as the second envoy to Jordan since diplomatic relations were established in 1994. His term is for three years.

Mr. Eran served most weeks as the foreign ministry's deputy director general for economic affairs. During the 1980s, he held the No. 2 post at the Israeli embassy in Washington.

Jordan and Israel established diplomatic ties in November 1994, one month after signing the second peace treaty between an Arab state and Israel, after Egypt.

Man kills wife, 4 children

(Continued from page 1)

let wound to the chest.

The coroner further revealed that each of the victims had been hit on the head with a sharp object.

"Most probably the children were struck by the butt of the gun," Dr. Hadidi told the Jordan Times.

Neighbours said that one child, who apparently tried to flee away, was found

shot dead under his bed.

Sources said the man also shot his four-year-old daughter Rasha, but neighbours found her alive and the authorities rushed her to the Karak government hospital where she lays in critical condition.

Another child, Nermeen, eight, hid in a closet in her bedroom. She was found in a state of shock, neighbours said. According to official

sources, the suspect, a service taxi driver in Aqaba, had two other children from a previous marriage. The two children were on a visit to their divorced mother in the Jordan Valley when the shooting incident occurred.

Al Ra'i correspondent in Karak, Mohammad Khawaldeh, contributed to this report.

Israel: 'Mega' is CIA Israel desk chief

(Continued from page 1)

Janet Reno said last week that a probe was being conducted into a possible Israeli spy scandal involving an intercepted conversation suggesting Israel had access to highly sensitive information through a U.S. source.

Citing unnamed Israeli diplomatic officials, Yediot said the assistant

to a Mossad intelligence agency official in Washington turned to a superior in Tel Aviv to authorise a request to "Mega" for a copy of the letter.

Israeli security sources said the code-name was used because the officials were using a normal, non-coded telephone line.

The paper said that an Israeli request to use that particular intelligence sharing channel would

not be extraordinary, but that the Mossad official in Tel Aviv decided the route was inappropriate for a diplomatic-political matter.

Mr. Netanyahu said last week there was no basis to the report and that Israel did not spy on the United States. He said he had instructed Israeli officials to cooperate with the U.S. probe.

Government raises water prices on usage above limit

(Continued from page 1)

He said that the funds come "mostly from foreign financial institutions like the world Bank, European Investment Bank, the German Reconstruction Bank and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)."

Dr. Haddadin said that the government has launched a campaign to close down more than 600 illegal water wells in Jordan to prevent "water theft that brings negative impact on the country's water resources."

He said that these wells pump more than 515 million cubic metres of water a year, while the annual safe limit should not exceed

275 million cubic metres every year.

"Unauthorized wells pumping increases salt in the soil, leads to water depletion, endangers investments and projects in the areas around these wells and deprive villages and rural areas from this source of water," Dr. Haddadin said.

Dr. Haddadin added that those who will not abide by the government regulations will be punished, and that the government move will not harm owners of licensed wells.

Quasir Qtaishat, secretary general of water and irrigation ministry, told reporters that the government is able to meet 75 per cent of Jordan's population needs of water and that Jordanian people's needs

increase by 40 per cent annually.

Mr. Qtaishat added the Jordanian individual's share of water is very low compared with people around the world.

He added that Jordanian per capita is 105 cubic metres a year, compared with 250 in Israel, 300 in France, 600 cubic metre in other European countries. The world per capita is 130 cubic-metre average annual share of water in the world is 130 cubic-metre, Mr. Qtaishat said (see water distribution plan on page 3).

Jordanian, German officials begin talks today on financial protocol for this year

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordanian-German meetings will be held at the Ministry of Planning Wednesday to specify the financial protocol between the two countries for 1997.

Planning Secretary General Nabil Ammari told Al Ra'i that the two sides will discuss increasing the volume of annual allocations provided for Jordan in order to expedite implementing the social safety net that was announced recently.

Dr. Ammari stressed that Germany understands Jordan's economic situation, especially the accomplishments achieved in structural economic reforms and the Kingdom's moves towards openness and towards joining the World Trade Organisation.

The secretary general expected that the discussions will result in a swap of a portion of Jordan's debts to Germany into funds for spending of development and social projects.

The Jordanian-German protocol is divided into three parts, namely: financial, technical and regional as well as bilateral cooperation and the protocol for last year was about DM 60 million "this year's protocol will be much higher than the previous year," he asserted.

Germany started providing Jordan with soft loans in 1962 and technical assistance in the form of grants in 1976.

Ministry to continue specifying price ceilings for basic foodstuffs

AMMAN (J.T.) — The government will continue to specify price ceilings for basic commodities such as rice, sugar, corn, wheat, tea and other items and will not consider floating the prices of these products, Minister of Trade, Industry and Supply Hani Mulki said Tuesday.

He explained that allowing the private sector to

import these products open the door for competition without exceeding the ceilings.

Dr. Mulki said that the ministry may increase and lower the ceilings according to the supplies available in the market.

Noting that the private sector can now import all foodstuffs without exceeding the price ceilings, Dr.

Mulki said that should the private sector refrain from importing these products, the ministry may intervene to import the necessary items to meet the market needs.

Referring to prices of produce, the minister indicated that a gradual drop was taking place and that price will stabilise very soon.

Asian Development Bank warns against Western model for growth

FUKUOKA, Japan (AFP) — Asia's developing countries should avoid Western models over the next three decades if they want to sustain economic growth, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has said.

"A turn toward protectionist policies around the world and a reduction in the growth of world trade could derail Asia's rapid growth," the bank said in a special report marking its 30th anniversary.

"Similarly, if Asia were to follow the path of much of Europe and of the United States toward higher government spending and increased social welfare programmes, growth would slow," the ADB added.

Such a pessimistic scenario for the future would include reduced economic openness and decreased government saving.

"If for instance, the average level of openness

in Asia contracted substantially and the average rate of government saving fell by five percentage points of gross domestic product, future growth rates in almost all Asian economies would be lower than those recorded in the last quarter of the century," the bank pointed out.

The ADB said the only exception might be in South Asia, where the effects of the continuing demographic transition are likely to boost growth per person. "Even here, however, future growth will depend on the continuation of current reform programmes," it said.

"Such an inward turn with slower growth is not only feasible, but has several precedents in world history."

"Latin America's growth, for instance, was interrupted by fiscal mismanagement and inward-looking industrial policies, and economic

growth around the world stagnated with the collapse in world trade in the 1930s during the great depression.

"Clearly, continued rapid growth in Asia is not assured, especially if conditions in the world trading system deteriorate significantly."

As well as such general concerns, the report said, China and India will have an "enormous influence" on Asia over the next 30 years.

"These countries are so large that their progress will have profound effects on both the rest of the region and on the global economy," it said.

The report noted while each had initiated fundamental reforms, China's were "much more advanced" than India's reforms.

"Many observers have raised questions about the sustainability of these reforms and about their potential impact on Asia's future," it said.

Iran repays 60 per cent of foreign debt

TEHRAN (R) — Iran, which was \$11 billion in arrears to its foreign creditors as recently as March 1994, has repaid 60 per cent of its foreign debt, Central Bank Governor Mohsen Nourbakhsh said.

"Sixty per cent of Iran's foreign debts have been paid and there is no problem in this respect," Mr. Nourbakhsh said in remarks reported in Tehran newspapers.

There were no further details on the debt repayments, but in January, the central bank said Iran's total foreign debt stood at \$20.4 billion as of Sept. 20.

Central bank figures in March showed rescheduled repayment obligations at \$7.15 billion in 1997-98. Higher than expected revenues from oil receipts are being channelled into debt repayments.

Mr. Nourbakhsh said the country's trade balance was \$18.4 billion for the past three years and hard currency savings had reached \$7 billion.

Iran's economic growth rate reached 5.2 per cent in the Iranian year 1375 which ended in March, while the figure for the industry sector was 6.3 per cent, he said.

"Iran's economy is considerably improving. That's a well-known fact in the world," the central bank governor added.

Michel Camdessus, managing director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), said last month he was satisfied with Iranian economic policy and he praised the country for reviving growth and bringing inflation down.

Mr. Camdessus told Mr. Nourbakhsh during spring meetings in Washington of the World Bank and IMF that he hoped the momentum of policy reform would continue, an IMF spokesman said.

Annual consumer inflation in urban areas slowed to 23.2 per cent in the year to March 20 from 49.4 per cent in the previous year, central bank figures showed.

REUTERS

REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	-	1.8954	0.8129	1.4350	118.70	1.3866	1676.70	1.9081	5.7155
DE Mark	0.5288	-	0.3609	0.5468	70.08	0.8171	988.10	1.1247	3.3686
GB Sterling	1.6316	2.7685	-	2.3410	193.97	2.2624	2735.87	3.1134	9.3280
CH Franc	0.6989	1.1806	0.4263	-	82.67	0.9657	1166.40	132.83	3.9767
JP Yen	0.0084	1.4271	0.5184	1.2079	-	1.1672	14.11	160.52	4.8099
CA Dollar	0.7212	1.2338	0.4481	1.0442	1.17	-	1220.21	1.3884	4.1619
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0107	0.3851	0.8855	1414.23	0.8268	-	11.37	3.4064
NL Guilder	0.5241	88.88	0.3210	75.25	62.21	0.7269	878.90	-	2.9856
FR Franc	0.1750	0.2968	0.1072	25.1050	20.75	0.2426	33.37	33.3700	-

Middle Eastern Currencies									
Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BAH	QAT	KUW	AED	LBP	EGP
US Dollar	-	0.7080	3.7504	0.3770	3.6402	0.3030	3.6728	1538.00	3.3895
Jordan Dinar	1.4124	-	5.2972	0.5324	5.1415	0.4279	5.1876	2172.32	4.7874
GB Sterling	0.2688	0.1888	-	0.1005	0.97	0.0805	0.98	410.09	0.9638
Bahrain Dinar	2.65	1.8781	9.9488	-	8.66	0.8037	9.74	4079.90	9.9913
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1945	1.0303	1.0303	-	0.0832	1.01	422.50	0.9311
Kuwait Dinar	3.3005	2.3368	12.3784	1.2442	12.01	-	12.12	5078.24	0.9311
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1928	1.0211	1.0206	0.9911	0.0825	-	418.75	0.9229
Lebanese 1000	0.65	0.4603	2.4385	0.2451	2.3668	0.1970	2.3880	-	2.2038
Egyptian	0.2950	0.2089	1.1065	0.1112	1.0740	0.0884	1.0836	453.76	-

Energy	
Brent	19.95 19.90
W. Texas	21.35 21.35
Bony	19.95 19.90
Dubai	18.70 18.70
UL Gas	192.00 192.00

Mid-East Currencies	
SA Riyal	0.2666 0.4522 0.16336 0.38289 31.6766
AE Dirham	0.2723 0.46174 0.16681 0.39098 32.3457
KW Dinar	3.3005 6.59587 2.02224 4.73934 392.157
BH Dinar	0.3770 4.48843 1.62522 3.80952 315.159
CY Pound	1.9714 3.3455 1.2083 2.6303 234.145

Metal Prices	
Gold (oz's)	347.7 348.2
Silver (oz's)	4.84 4.86
Platinum (oz's)	389 390
AL (3 Months)	1667 1668
CU (3 Months)	2419 2420
Zinc (3 Months)	1335.5 1336
Lead (3 Months)	625 626
NI (3 Months)	7765 7770

Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)	
Period	1-3 Months 3-6 Months 6-9 Months 9-12 Months Year
USD	5.55 5.71 5.87 5.99 6.12
GBP	6.21 6.32 6.50 6.62 6.80
JPY	0.38 0.56 0.50 0.75 0.87
DEM	2.84 3.05 3.02 3.15 3.24
FRF	3.20 3.32 3.38 3.39 3.40
CHF	1.82 1.88 1.75 1.82 1.81
ITL	6.50 6.75 6.74 6.83 6.80

Main Equity Indices							
Bourse	Index	Value	Chng	% Chng	High	Low	Pr Cls
New York	DOW JONES	7270.5	-22.25	-0.31	7306.76	7255.28	7292.75
New York	S&P 500	834.53	-3.13	-0.37	838.49	832.97	837.66
London	FT-SE 100	4691	21.4	0.46	4720.3	4676.8	4669.6
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	20129.11	-14.4	-0.07	20452.4	20119.8	20143.5
Paris	CAC 40	2719.58	28.49	0.98	2732.94	2701.8	2693.09
Frankfurt	DAX	3595.15	19.78	0.55	3597.36	3581.03	3575.37

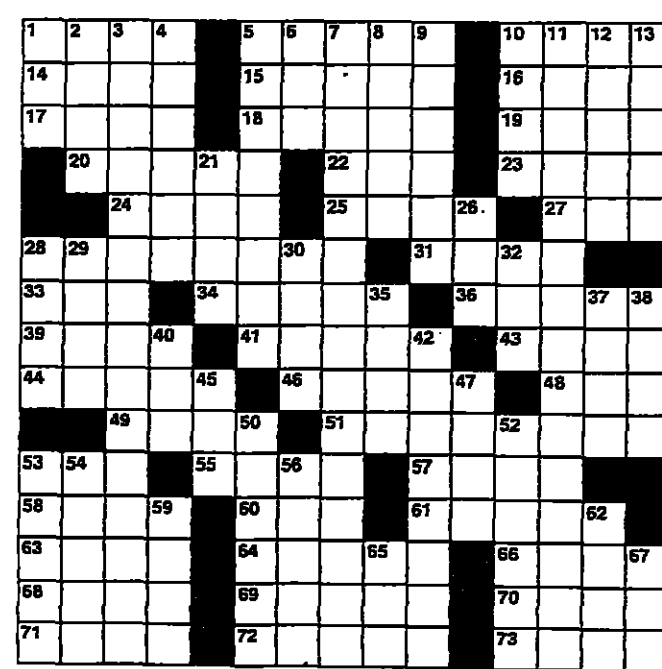
Energy		
Commodity	Last	Delivery
Coffee (c/lbs)	252.5	Spot
Cocoa (\$/ton)	1447	Spot
Sugar (\$/ton)	321.8	Spot
Wheat (\$/ton)	174.5	Spot
Soya (c/lbs)	23.83	Spot
Tea (\$/kg)	157	Spot
Barley (\$/bsh)	0	Spot
Rice (\$/ton)	480	Spot

* JOD Cross Rates		
Currency	Buy	Sell
US Dollar	0.708	0.710
GB Sterling	1.1478	1.1533
DE Mark	0.4153	0.4174
CH Franc	0.4928	0.4951
FR Franc	0.1232	0.1238
JP Yen	0.5937	0.5967
NL Guilder	0.3893	0.3711
IT Lira	0.4189	0.421

* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

THE Daily Crossword

- ACROSS
- Straight-laced
 - Karenina and Mollo
 - homol
 - Prohibit
 - Inclined
 - Joint affliction
 - Hardy heroine
 - Ziti, e.g.
 - Spiritual guide
 - Spurious
 - Supply holder
 - Got under the tag
 - Goat cheese
 - Chilled
 - Fenale
 - kangaroo
 - Cheese type
 - Rats!
 - Chipper's concern
 - Bush challenger
 - Paris subway
 - Baltic feeder
 - Yield
 - Vamoose
 - Pie nut
 - Following
 - Cuckoo
 - Drop
 - Fast, careenwise
 - Australian bird
 - "I Love —"
 - Steak order
 - Highway division
 - Alphabet run
 - Papal vestment
 - Preentious
 - Detached
 - Give out cards
 - Wheel cover
 - Issei progeny
 - Abstract being
 - "Airplane!" pilot
 - Chris of tennis
 - Charles' dog

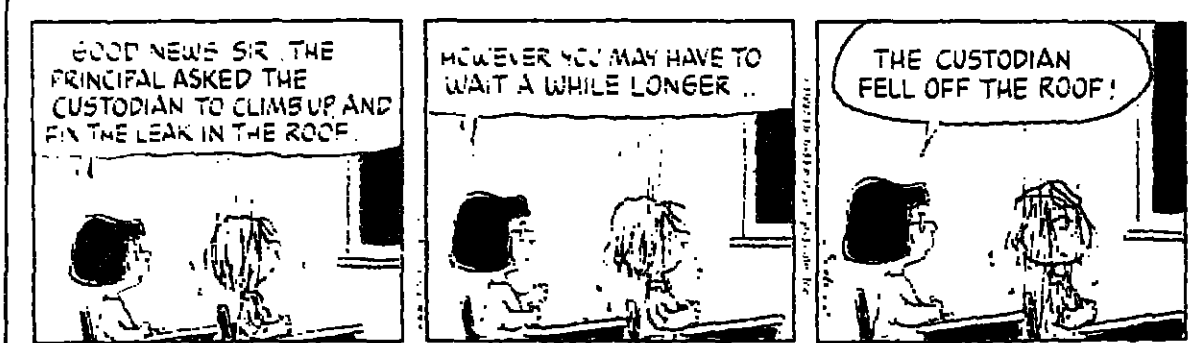


by Anthony R. Mupo

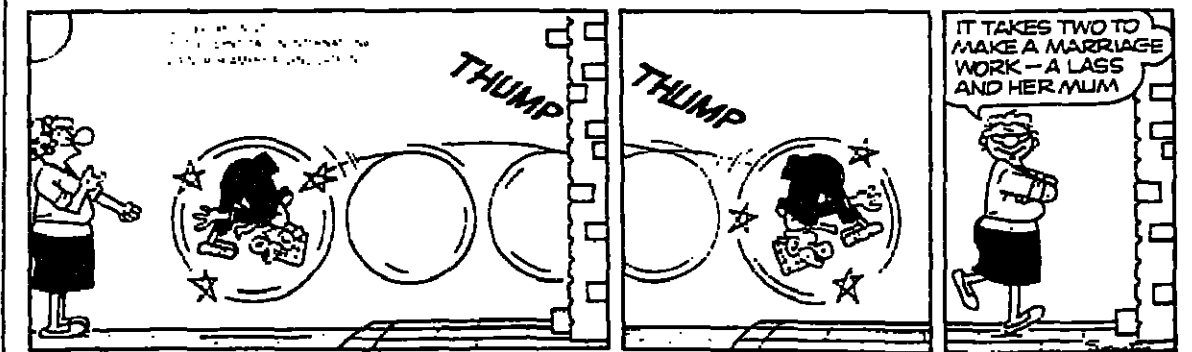
OPIC	GALS	ODAS
DIVA	ABIE	RALES
ITEM	LOOM	INANE
CALIFORNIA	ASUITE	
SORT	ROB	
ASHORE	FAINEANT	
SICALIA	RIARE	NEW
HIONEYS	UCKLE	ROSE
END	HIES	GESTE
RESIDENT	SAGEST	
NIAB	ANDI	
SACCHARINE	SMILE	
ARAIL	EDIGE	ELAN
CENTIL	DEIER	NING
ASEIA	DAILY	TIADS

- DOWN
- G.I.
 - Ridge of rocks
 - Trite comeback
 - Islam adherent
 - Mollified
 - Gun gp.
 - Trite comeback
 - Ludicrous act
 - Enthroned
 - Breakfast dish
 - Trite comeback
 - Trinket
 - Piano composition
 - Phase
 - Block up
 - Recline quickly
 - Senator's helper
 - Neighborhood
 - public
 - Nice noggin
 - Indian prince
 - Auricular
 - Butt
 - Modify original parts
 - Nothing
 - Bring up
 - Southern university
 - Israeli port city
 - Santa —
 - 954
 - Looks over
 - Certain region
 - Atop, to Keats
 - Meadow

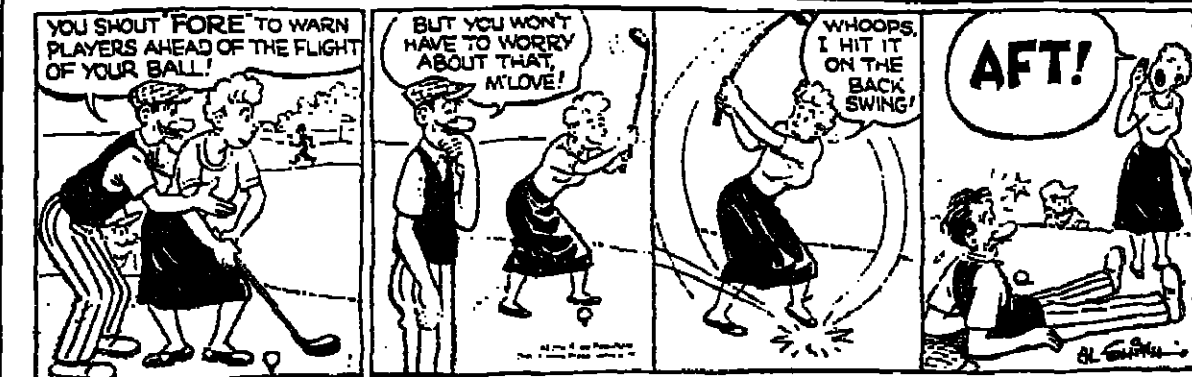
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR WEDNESDAY, MAY 14, 1997

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Have a discussion today with loved ones about mutual interests and be more aware of difficulties connected with them. Later this evening you will be able to discuss your career activities with knowledgeable people.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) This is a good day today so sit down with a fellow associate and see where you are both headed and devise a course of action which will be successful. Take it easy with your loved ones and have a pleasant time together.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You are able today to gain more benefits from whatever projects you are engaged in, so gather them in. Later this evening you can get together with fellow associates and devise a plan of action for mutual prosperity.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You are able to enjoy recreations which you like the most today, be they athletic or romantic. Later this evening you can meet with close friends and have a fun time together in recreational activities which are relaxing.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Study your personal desires early today and then you can get a loved one to assist you in gaining them. Later tonight will be good to discuss your career activities with knowledgeable people and gain much success.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) If you are understanding with new acquaintances today they can be turned into fast and devoted friends, so make every effort to establish a good rapport. Later this evening you can go out on the town with your mate.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Look to individuals today of both sexes who can assist you in some vital business project, so seek some critical advice. Later tonight you can meet with those in authority and discuss your career objectives for your success.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You have an advanced course of action you want to follow today, however, handle it from a different angle for best results. Later this evening you can gain the insight from fellow associates to get a new project completed.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You can pay bills today which have been worrying you for some time and thereby you will have one less thing on your mind. Do whatever your mate desires later this evening and you can reduce a difficult situation.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Have a meeting today with fellow associates and plan a new enterprise wisely so that it can meet with success. Later tonight you will be able to consult with a bigwig and discuss what course of action will be most effective.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You can get a whole pile of career activities behind you today if you apply yourself seriously and do whatever is required. Take time later this evening for your friends and have a wonderful time together.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Become more romantic today with your beloved and the evening can be a highly pleasurable time together. This is a good time for you to stay home and just relax and allow the tension of career activities to dissolve away.

Birthstone of May: Emerald — Citrine

Jazz win series; Knicks up 3-1

SALT LAKE CITY (R) — Karl Malone scored six of his 32 points in overtime and grabbed 20 rebounds to lead the Utah Jazz into the Western Conference finals with a tough 98-93 win over the young Los Angeles Lakers Monday.

"It was a hard-fought victory," said Malone. "They played their butts off, they gave us all we could handle."

The Jazz's 4-1 victory in the best-of-seven series put Utah in the Conference finals for the fourth time in six years. The Jazz will play the winner of the other West semifinal between Houston and Seattle.

In Monday's other NBA playoff game, the New York Knicks went up 3-1 over the Miami Heat with an 89-76 victory sparked by 21 points from John Starks and 20 from Patrick Ewing.

The Lakers showed their youth with a flurry of choke shots at crunch time. These included an air ball from 25-year-old Nick Van Eggel, who led Los Angeles with 26 points, and 18-year-old Kobe Bryant — who had an air ball on a potential game-winning shot at the end of regulation and three more bad misses, two of them air balls, in overtime.

"The most important thing, we didn't panic," said Malone. "We went into that overtime after dodging that bullet saying, 'we've got a chance.'"

"L.A., they're young, they still got a lot to learn, but they'll learn," said Utah's Bryon Russell.

The Lakers 25-year-old centre Shaquille O'Neal fouled out with 1:46 remaining in regulation and Los Angeles leading by three. He finished with 23 points and 13 rebounds.

"The big fella, he fouled out and we took advantage of it," said Russell.

John Stockton had 24 points on 11-of-13 shooting from the field and 10 assists and Russell added 22 points for the Jazz.

The Jazz extended their home winning streak to 19 games and improved to 43-3 at the Delta Centre this season. Utah has the home-court advantage in the West finals.

Malone had 19 points and 11 rebounds in the first half when the Jazz built a 53-45 lead.

The Jazz held a 60-51 advantage when Los Angeles's Robert Horry was ejected for throwing a punch at Utah's Jeff Hornacek with 8:02 left in the third quarter.

Utah opened its biggest lead at 66-53, but the



Utah Jazz forward Karl Malone (L) passes away from Los Angeles Lakers forward Elden Campbell (R) during early second half action in Salt Lake City (Reuters photo)

Lakers scored the last eight points of the third quarter and eight of the first 10 points of the fourth quarter to take a 69-68 lead.

In New York, Starks, who hit just 5-of-24 shots from the field in the first three games of the series, converted 9-of-12 this time.

"I needed to come out and take charge and play more aggressively," the NBA's sixth man of the year said. "I needed to be John Starks. Patrick Ewing kind of burned me, he prompted me, I guess you could call it. Now we need to go to Miami and take care of business."

New York could close out the series by winning game 5 Wednesday night at Miami. The Knicks, who are 6-1 in the post season, have won three of four games at Miami this season.

Eastern Conference semifinals
New York 89 Miami 76
(New York leads best-of-seven series 3-1)

Western Conference semifinals
Utah 98 LA Lakers 93 (OT)
(Utah wins best-of-seven series 4-1)

Larry Bird introduced as Pacers coach

INDIANAPOLIS (R) — It was his competitive spirit that brought Larry Bird back from the city where he achieved glory as one of basketball's all-time greatest players to his home state as coach of the Indiana Pacers, "Larry legend" told a news conference Monday.

"Everybody asks me why do I want to do this," said Bird, who reached a multi-year agreement with the Pacers last Thursday. "I've always been competitive and I've been laying around for five years. I found that 35 was too young to retire. And this is my home state."

Bird, 40, ends a long, glorious relationship with the Boston Celtics and replaces Larry Brown, who resigned last week and later was named coach of the Philadelphia 76ers. The Celtics named Rick Pitino

as their head coach last week.

"I didn't want to be behind Rick and the people he brought in," said Bird, who was a special assistant with the Celtics since his retirement in 1992. "I wanted to be more involved."

Terms were not disclosed, but various reports put Bird's salary at \$4 million per year, with options ranging from entering the front office to part ownership.

"I didn't want to coach any other team," said Bird. The Pacers asked me three or four years ago before coach Brown came in if I had any interest in coaching the team. At that time my back was still bothering me and I was still having a lot of problems.

"When the time came around and they asked me again, I felt if I didn't take

the opportunity now, it would probably be my last opportunity. So I jumped on it and here I am."

Bird was one of the smartest players in NBA history during his 13 seasons with the Boston Celtics, but he has never held any sort of coaching job.

Bird was born in West Baden, Indiana, and was raised in French Lick. He attended Indiana University, briefly, and then Indiana State. He led the Sycamores to the 1979 NCAA title game, where they lost to Magic Johnson and Michigan State.

That game forever linked Bird and Johnson, whose rivalry continued in the NBA and is credited for saving the league from fan disaffection.

Bird won a Rookie of the

Year award, three Most Valuable Player awards and three NBA titles in 13 years with the Celtics before chronic back pain forced him to retire in 1992. He joined the Boston front office as a special assistant shortly thereafter.

Brown left Bird a pretty good starting team even though the Pacers, hit hard by injuries, finished just 39-43 and missed the playoffs for the first time since 1989.

The team features scorers in guard Reggie Miller and centre Rik Smits and has hardworking, productive forwards in Dale and Antonio Davis. Point guard Mark Jackson, re-acquired in February, led the NBA in assists.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

O'Sullivan to run 5 races

DUBLIN (R) — Ireland's Sonia O'Sullivan will begin her buildup to the Athens World Championships in August with a race over 1,500 metres in Oregon on May 26. The world 5,000 metres champion, who will drop down a distance to 1,500 in Athens, said Tuesday she would run five races only before the World Championships. O'Sullivan, 27, won a silver medal over 3,000 metres at the World Indoor Championships in Paris in March. Later in the same month she finished ninth in the World Cross Country Championships in Turin.

Bomb scare delays Barcelona

BARCELONA (R) — The plane carrying the Barcelona team to Rotterdam for Wednesday's European Cup Winners' Cup final was delayed by more than four hours by a bomb scare on Monday. Passengers were ordered off the 747 charter jet and told to identify their luggage while the plane was checked by security forces. Barcelona newspaper El Periodico De Catalunya had received the telephone warning at 2:30 p.m. local time (12:30 GMT). "There is a bomb put in the plane in which football club Barcelona are travelling," said the caller. The plane was carrying 355 passengers, including players, club officials, media and fans to the game against Paris Saint Germain.

Key is first seven-game winner as O's beat A's

OAKLAND (R) — Jimmy Key became the first seven-game winner in the majors and Tony Tarasco belted a three-run homer as the Baltimore Orioles handed the Oakland Athletics their sixth straight loss Monday, 5-1.

Key (7-0) allowed one run and six hits over 7 2/3 innings, did not issue a walk and had no strikeouts in winning his sixth straight start. He has surrendered just two runs and 16 hits over his last three outings, covering 21 2/3 innings.

Key, who lowered his league-leading earned run average to 1.82, defeated Oakland for the second time this season and improved to 11-8 lifetime against the A's.

"The thing I feel best about is that every time out I've given the team a chance to win," key said. "That's what they brought me in here to do, be consistent. I've always said that when I'm healthy, I can pitch. I've proven that over my career."

Key's 7-0 start is the second best by an Oriole. Dave McNally began the 1969 season 15-0 and Ben McDonald won his first seven decisions in 1994.

"That's Jimmy Key, he just give us a great effort every time out whether he has good stuff or not," Orioles Manager Davey Johnson said. "He lets the people behind him play, they like to play behind him too. He's an infielder's dream."

Armando Benitez got the final out of the eighth and worked a perfect ninth for his third save.

"You know he's (Key) going to keep his team in the game and give them six or seven good innings," Oakland's Rafael Bournival said. "You have to fight him

the whole game. You never know what he's going to throw. He's got three great pitches and he throws everything for strikes."

The Orioles have won four of six and improved the American League's best record to 24-11. Oakland has lost eight of nine.

Athletics starter Steve Karsay (0-4) took the loss. Oakland's Mark McGwire snapped a career-long 0-for-22 skid with a seventh-inning single.

In Milwaukee, Gerald Williams highlighted a seven-run fourth inning with a two-run single and Jeremy Burnitz had a single, double and triple as the Milwaukee Brewers held on for their season-high fifth straight win, 9-8, over the Seattle Mariners.

Seattle's Ken Griffey hit his Major League-leading 16th home run, a two-run shot, in the first off Jeff D'Amico (1-2) to stake the Mariners to a 2-0 lead. But Milwaukee took the lead for good with seven runs in the fourth against Bob Wolcott (2-2).

Burnitz doubled, tripled and singled in his first three at-bats and walked his next two plate appearances.

Asked if he was trying to hit for the cycle, he admitted: "Yes, I was. I was definitely looking for a pitch to spin on and try to hit one out of the park, but I didn't get it. What can you do? You just take what they give you and I got a couple of walks."

In Anaheim, Jim Leyritz had three hits and drove in four runs as the Angels tied a club record with 13 runs in an inning, rallying to defeat the Chicago White Sox 16-8.

Eight different players drove in runs during the 18-inning attack and five different players scored at least a pair

of runs. The Angels set a season high in hits and their 11 hits in the 13-run seventh inning tied a 37-year-old franchise record.

Jim Edmonds homered for Anaheim.

At Minnesota, Greg Myers had four hits and scored four runs and Greg Colbrunn tied a career high with four hits as the twins set a season high for runs and avoided a four-game sweep by defeating the Toronto Blue Jays, 12-2.

Myers and Colbrunn each drove in a pair of runs and Roberto Kelly added three hits as the twins, who have never been swept in a four-game series at the Metrodome by Toronto, pounded out 20 hits.

The win was the 800th for Minnesota manager Tom Kelly.

Brad Radke (3-2) allowed two runs and nine hits over seven innings, walking none and striking out seven. Todd Ritchie and Rick Aguilera each added a scoreless frame in relief.

At Texas, John Burkett allowed one run over eight innings and Will Clark hit two home runs as the Rangers had four round trippers for their fourth straight victory, 4-2 over the Cleveland Indians.

Burkett (2-2) allowed seven hits, walked one and struck out three for his first win in five starts. John Wetteland allowed one run and two hits with a walk and a strikeout in the ninth inning for his ninth save.

Benji Gil and Lee Stevens also homered for Texas.

Jack McDowell (3-3) gave up two runs and three hits in six innings as the Indians lost for the sixth time in their last seven trips to Texas.

Greg Maddux wins fourth straight as Braves pound Pirates

PITTSBURGH (R) — Greg Maddux won his fourth straight decision and Atlanta continued its torrid scoring as the Braves routed the Pittsburgh Pirates 10-2 Monday to take the final three games of their four-game series.

Maddux (4-1) pitched five innings and allowed a run and six hits. He walked none and struck out seven. He improved to 13-13 in his career against Pittsburgh, leaving Cincinnati as the only National League team he has a losing record against.

Maddux threw only 68 pitches before leaving with an eight-run lead. Relievers Alan Embree, Brad Clontz and Joe Borowski allowed just one run and six hits over the final four innings.

"If I can save an inning here or there the only possible thing it can do is help," said Maddux. "It's not going to hurt you. We scored a lot of runs. The guys picked me up, it was nice."

After getting shut out 9-0 in the series opener Friday, the Braves outscored the Pirates 27-7 in winning the last three contests, completing a 5-3 road trip.

Chipper Jones had three hits, including a home run and a double, and scored three runs for Atlanta.

"I think what we read in the paper (and) seeing what we saw on TV about how well Pittsburgh was playing, we knew these last three ballgames we had to assert ourselves," said Jones.

"It seems like the bats woke up. Pitching is always going to be there. They did an outstanding job the past three games."

Michael Tucker had a homer and scored twice for the Braves, who scored in double figures for the fifth time this season.

Former Brave Jason Schmidt (1-2) took the loss, giving up nine runs and 10 hits in only 4 2/3 innings.

Pittsburgh's Tony Womack went 2-for-3 to extend his hitting streak to 12 games and Keith Osik was 3-for-4 with two doubles and a run scored.

In Philadelphia, Dante Bichette homered and drove in four runs as the Colorado Rockies snapped a season-high five-game losing streak with a 9-2 victory over the Phillies.

John Burke pitched 2 2/3 scoreless innings of relief after coming on for starter Billy Swift in the third inning. Mike Dejean (1-0) then worked 3 2/3 perfect innings to notch his first Major League win.

"That's the longest I've ever pitched in professional baseball," said Dejean. "When you're seven runs ahead, you've got to throw strikes and stay aggressive."

Dejean also collected his first career hit — a double in the eighth — in his first career at-bat.

Swift, who hasn't lost since April 2, departed due to a strained right pectoral muscle.

"Swift can't throw across his body," said Rockies manager Don Baylor. "It had subsided somewhat, but it has been lingering. We'll probably be putting him on the disabled list."

Bobby Munoz (1-5) gave up six runs — five earned — and nine hits with no walks and two strikeouts over 2 2/3 innings, his shortest start of the season.

"My confidence is a little down," said Munoz. "But I've got to keep striving to get better. I have to try to get over it now and not let it carry over to my next game. If there's a next start, great. If there's not, there's not."

"Sometimes Bobby masks his emotions," said Phillies manager Terry Francona. "So it's hard to tell how he feels. I hope he believes in himself because if he doesn't, then we have a problem."

Gregg Jefferies provided Philadelphia's lone runs in the third with a two-run homer — his second of the year and 100th of his career.

At Florida, Moises Alou had three hits, including a pair of doubles, and scored three times and rob Stanifer won his first Major-League decision as the Marlins defeated the Houston Astros 11-4.

Trailing 3-1 in the fourth, the Marlins capitalised on an error by Houston second baseman Craig Biggio and rallied for five runs.

Florida loaded the bases with one out against Astros starter Shane Reynolds (4-3), who induced pinch-hitter Jim Eisenreich to ground into a potential inning-ending double play. But Biggio let the ball roll through his legs, allowing Bobby Bonilla and Jeff Conine to score.

"The ball stayed down low," said Biggio. "I thought I was low enough. That was a big play and it turned the game around."

The Marlins improved to a Major-League leading 17-5 at home.

Stanifer (1-0) allowed a home run to Ricky Gutierrez and five hits over 2 1/3 innings of relief. He also picked up his first Major-League hit in the sixth.

Derek Bell went 3-for-4 with a homer, triple and a single for the Astros.

TODAY AT

CINEMA TEL:634144

PHILADELPHIA "1"

Pierce Brosnan & Linda Hamilton ... in

DANTE'S PEAK

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL:634144

PHILADELPHIA "2"

Johnny Depp...in

NICK OF TIME

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL:699238

PLAZA

Keanu Reeves ... in
CHAIN REACTION

Shows: 3:15, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

Top Disney production
101 DALMATIANS

Shows: 12:30, 5:00

CINEMA TEL:677420

CONCORD

CONCORD "1"
Winner of 9 Oscars
THE ENGLISH PATIENT

Shows: 12:00, 3:00, 6:00, 9:00

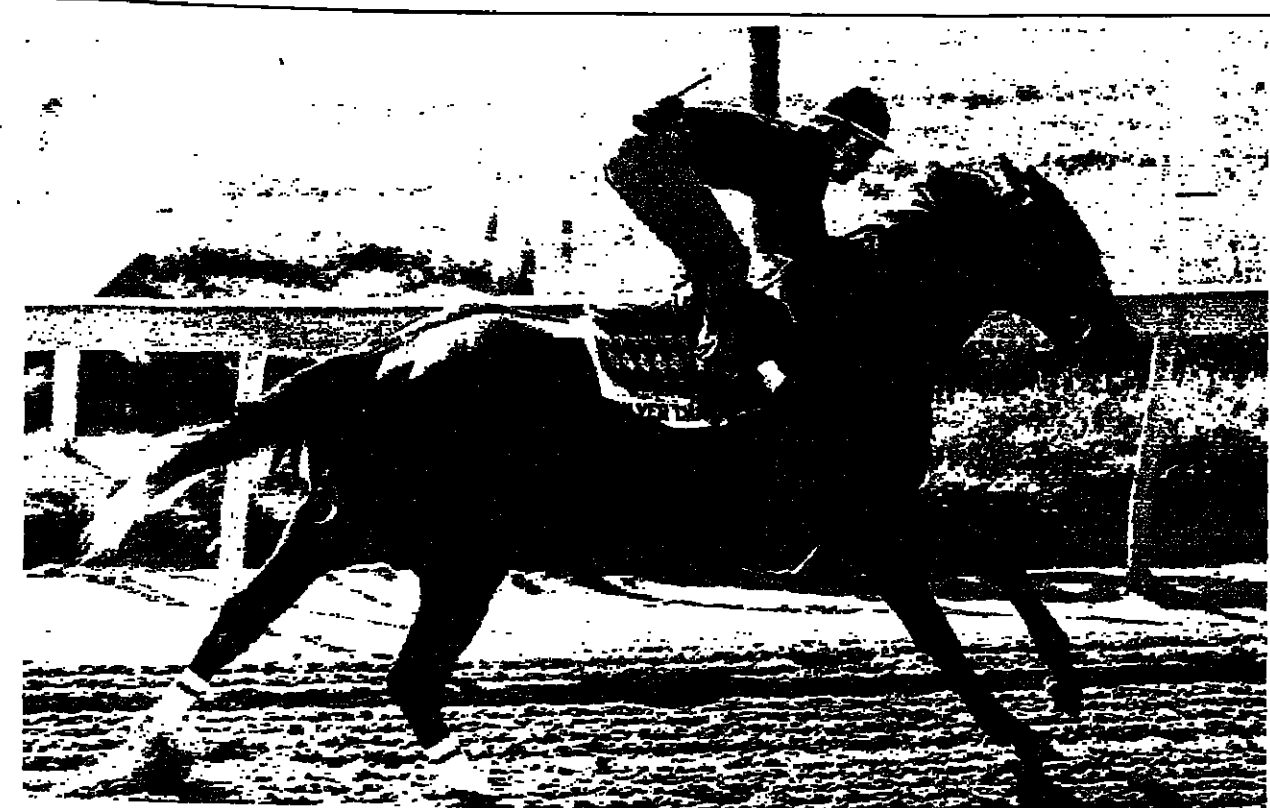
CONCORD "2"
Michael Jordan...in
SPACEJAM

Shows: 3:30, 6:00

Nabil & Risham's Theatre
TEL: 625155

The political satire
- AMN YA HO

For reservations call 625155



Kentucky Derby winner Silver Charm, with exercise rider Joe Steiner up, goes through an early morning workout on the track at Pimlico in preparation for the 122nd running of the Preakness Stakes May 17 (Reuters photo)

Ferreira makes early exit from Italian Open

ROME (R) — South Africa's Wayne Ferreira, a semifinalist for the past two years, made a quick exit from the Italian Open Monday, squandering five match points on his way to a first-round defeat by Sweden Magnus Larsson.

The ninth seed angrily threw his racket at a chair after failing to keep his nerve at the vital stages of a 4-6 7-5 7-6 upset on the grandstand court.

The grandstand proved something of a graveyard for seeds on Monday as Australia's Mark Philippoussis lost in straight sets to Morocco's Karim Alami, ranked 68 in the world.

The big-serving No. 16 seed, a surprise winner on clay at Munich last month, was humiliated 6-2 6-0.

Ferreira wasted four matchpoints at 5-3 on Larsson's serve in the second set and one more when serving for the match at 5-4 before allowing his opponent to level at one set apiece.

The South African looked to have regained control as he broke Larsson in the opening game of the final set and took a 3-1 lead but the big Swede broke back to push the match into a decisive tiebreak.

With Ferreira swiping at the clay in frustration and continually berating himself, Larsson raced into a 5-0 lead before the number nine staged a brief rally.

But it was too late as a calm Larsson closed out the match on his second matchpoint with a delicate dropshot from the back of the court.

Defeat represented another sorry chapter in a wretched clay court season for Ferreira who has just one victory to his name in five tournaments.

For Larsson, number 41 in the world after fighting back from injury, it was his third big victory on clay this season.

Last month he fought back from a set down to defeat French Open champion Yevgeny Kafelnikov in Barcelona and World No. 1 Pete Sampras in Monte



Austria's Thomas Muster returns a ball to Italian Marzio Martelli during their first round at Italian Open in Rome. Muster beat Martelli 6-3, 6-2 (Reuters photo)

Carlo. There were no problems for defending champion Thomas Muster and last year's runner-up Richard Krajicek, both of whom swaggered back into town to shoot down a couple of the Foro Italico's local heroes.

Number three seed Muster, the Austrian strongman with the piercing gaze, toyed with wild card Marzio Martelli before killing him off 6-3 6-2.

Wimbledon champion Krajicek, his eyes reddened by a

heavy cold, was made to fight in the first set by Italian Davis Cup doubles specialist Diego Nargiso before firing down a series of unstoppable first serves to win 7-5 6-3.

Muster, after notching up his 500th career clay-court win, did not once mention Martelli in a post-match news conference devoted almost entirely to his newfound prowess on hardcourt and recent failures on his one-time favourite surface clay.

"You cannot expect me to win every clay-court tournament like I did two years ago," said the Austrian, who has won more clay-court matches and titles than any other tour player.

In three tournaments on

clay this year, Muster has not progressed beyond the round of 16 — a marked contrast with his victories at the Lipton and Dubai on hardcourts. The Italian Open, a favourite venue where he has won for the past two years and three times in total, offers him the chance to reassert himself on clay.

By contrast, Krajicek, a hardcourt specialist, still has to prove himself on clay and admitted that winning the French open in Paris in two weeks' time was his number one goal of 1997. "It would be nice to win two Wimbledons but maybe it would be nicer to win Paris and show people that I am a good player on clay," said the number five seed.

1st Division Basketball Championship Orthodoxi, Ahli battle for 2nd place tonight

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Al Orthodoxi and Al Ahli conclude the 1997 First Division Basketball Championship when they meet Wednesday evening in the match deciding second and third places.

Al Ahli lie second behind newly-crowned champions Al Jazireh while Al Orthodoxi are third.

Al Ahli will have to repeat their first round win by any score to clinch second place since both teams lost to Al Jazireh in both rounds.

However, Al Orthodoxi will have to win by over 4 points to clinch runner-up spot since Al Ahli won the first round match 70-66.

Following the match, Al Jazireh will be crowned the new champions in 33 years after capturing the championship title with an unbeaten record.

They beat titleholders Al Orthodoxi 74-67 and Al Ahli 82-59 in the second round. Al Jazireh had defeated Al Ahli 85-57 in the first round and Al Orthodoxi 62-54.

Al Jazireh's win ended the decades-long dominance of titleholders Al Orthodoxi and all-time rivals Al Ahli over one of the country's most prestigious sports titles leaving the two former champions fighting for second and third places.

After coming close to the title in the past two seasons Al Jazireh started this year's competition with a clear determination to clinch the title with their young lineup apparently well-prepared after their participation in the Arab Clubs tournament in Tunisia last month.

The other top two teams — Al Ahli and Al Orthodoxi — seemed to have their own shortcomings during the competition.

Although their team had prepared with a series of matches in Syria voicing hope that they would retain their title for the third year running, Al Orthodoxi found themselves in third place instead of topping the overall standings for the first time in years.

On the other hand, and following their dismal showing against Al Jazireh in the first round, Al Ahli handed their

new coach Raffi Cholukyan the reigns taking over from Ghaith Najjar, the head coach for the past two seasons, during which the team was unable to reclaim the title and have been in a slumping form ever since.

With three of Jordan's top players — Naser Bushnaq, Yousef Zaghloul and Marwan Ma'touq — off the team Cholukyan, a former head coach of the Soviet Unions' national teams, has been trying to lift the teams form in trying to end Al Orthodoxi's current two-year reign or maintain an advanced standing.

Al Ahli were previously trained by Ukrainian Alexander Sacha who guided the team to a 1990 win ending Al Orthodoxi's 1976-1989 reign atop the Kingdom's basketball scene.

Al Ahli went on to win the crown in 1992, 93, 94 before Sacha left his post after apparent differences with the board.

The other teams in the competition are out of the spotlights.

Al Hussein came in fourth despite playing with no serious goal in mind after Yarmouk were relegated for withdrawing at the beginning of the competition.

On the other hand, Al Jalil's team disintegrated from one match to another finishing last after retaining fourth place for years.

Al Ahli -Al Orthodoxi match will be held at 7:15 p.m. at the Sports Palace.

Standings

Team	P	W	L	SF	SA	Pts
Jazireh	8	8	-	675	413	16
Ahli	7	5	2	447	382	12
Orthodoxi	7	4	3	568	379	11
Hussein	8	1	7	329	605	9
Jalil	8	1	7	308	548	7
Yarmouk	-	-	-	-	-	-

*Relegated to 2nd Division

Barcelona favourites for fourth Cup Winners crown

ROTTERDAM (R) — Barcelona will be without their hard-tackling defender Miguel Angel Nadal when they attempt to win the European Cup Winners' Cup for an unprecedented fourth time against holders Paris St Germain Wednesday.

Nadal was sent off during the second leg of Barcelona's semi-final victory over Fiorentina which earned him a two-match ban.

But Bobby Robson is expected to recall French defender Laurent Blanc to the side after Blanc missed Saturday's 1-0 Spanish League win over Real Madrid through injury.

Brazilian Giovanni, injured against Real, is expected to be fit but will probably be on the bench rather than in the starting line-up.

Barcelona's preparations for the match were

hit on Tuesday when their flight to Rotterdam was delayed for four hours because of a bomb scare.

Initially the players were in good spirits but, as the delay lengthened, Robson and the rest of the squad became decidedly irritable and finally got to their beds well past midnight.

The match could well be an open, attacking one, with a fascinating battle in prospect between Ronaldo, Barcelona's Brazilian who has scored 32 goals this season, and the Brazilians in the French side, Leonardo and Rai.

PSG showed in the second leg of their semi-final against Liverpool that they can withstand an attacking bombardment because although they lost that match 2-0 they still went through 3-2 on aggregate after destroying Liverpool with a controlled attacking display

in the first leg.

PSG have no suspensions to worry about and are expected to field their strongest side as they bid to become the first team in the competition's 36-year history to retain the trophy.

"Barcelona have been better organised in recent weeks but I can't see any big difference between us and them. We may not be favourites but everybody talks more about their players individually than about Barcelona as a team," PSG's Brazilian coach Ricardo said.

"I'm not building a team to counter Ronaldo, Giovanni, Figo or De la Pena. In a final you must express yourself. Few teams have won a final by relying on counter-attacks alone."

Ricardo, however, has a special plan to counter Ronaldo, a player he knows from training

camps with Brazil in 1994, by assigning Bruno N'Gotty to shadow him.

"I always play my best matches against the best players. Personally, I wish to become one of the best defenders there is and it's a fine opportunity to prove what I can do," N'Gotty said.

Probable teams:

Barcelona — Vitor Baia, Sergi Barjuan, Laurent Blanc, Abelardo Fernandez, Albert Ferrer, Josep Guardiola, Luis Enrique, Ivan De La Pena, Hristo Stoichkov, Luis Figo, Ronaldo.

Paris St Germain — Bernard Lama, Laurent Fournier, Bruno N'Gotty, Paul Le Guen, Jimmy Almerino, Jerome Leroy, Benoit Caet, Vincent Guerin, Leonardo, Rai, Patrice Loko.

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Neither vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH		EAST	
♠ A 10 5 2	♠ K Q 7 4	♠ K Q 7 4	♠ K Q 7 4
♥ Q J 10 8	♥ Q 4	♥ Q 4	♥ Q 4
♦ A J 7 5	♦ Q 9 8 5	♦ Q 9 8 5	♦ Q 9 8 5
♣ A Q 10 8	♣ K 7 3 2	♣ K 7 3 2	♣ K 7 3 2
SOUTH		WEST	
♠ J 9	♠ A K J 8 7 6	♠ A K J 8 7 6	♠ A K J 8 7 6
♥ K 6	♥ K 6	♥ K 6	♥ K 6
♦ A 9 4	♦ A 9 4	♦ A 9 4	♦ A 9 4

The bidding: South 1NT, West 2NT, North 3NT, East 4NT.

Opening lead: Three of ♠.

There is an ever-growing body of bridge literature teaching you how to execute various technical plays that every competent declarer knows by heart. However, they do not always explain properly when to employ those tactics.

With only three-card support for hearts, North first made a waiting bid in diamonds, then leaped to game after partner rebid hearts.

South had no further ambitions. West led a low spade, declarer played low from dummy then jettisoned the jack of spades under East's queen to set up a finesse position in the suit. East returned a trump, taken in dummy, and a club was ducked to West.

Back came another trump, and a second club was ducked, completing the defensive book. West persevered with a trump, removing dummy's last fang, and declarer was now reduced to a finesse in either spades or diamonds to get rid of the losing club. It was a guess that declarer could not make correctly, so the contract went down two.

Had declarer stopped to count tricks before playing to the opening lead, the winning line might have become obvious. Declarer has six trump tricks, two diamonds and a spade, nine tricks in all. The sure way to secure a 10th is via a club ruff, and to accomplish that declarer cannot afford to let the enemy play trumps.

Declarer should win the ace of spades at trick one and immediately lead a club. Now declarer is a tempo ahead, and no matter what the defenders do declarer will always have time to ruff the third club and nail down the fulfilling trick.

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Jordan

Strengthening peace with Israel is 'one of most important Jordanian objectives' — prime minister

AMMAN (Petra) — One of the most important objectives of Jordan's foreign policy in the coming stage is to enhance and strengthen peace with Israel and put into force the different agreements that resulted from the 1994 peace treaty with the Jewish state, Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali said Tuesday.

Lecturing senior army officers at the Royal War College, Dr. Majali said that the Kingdom's foreign policy is designed to help the country ensure local economic development and a comprehensive regional development and to enable the country to use the treaty towards achieving a comprehensive and just peace in the Middle East region.

On the domestic front the government strives to promote industry and exploit available markets for exporting national products and giving due attention to new investments and modern technology, the prime minister said. He noted that Jordan hopes to achieve these objectives through

new agreements and free trade with other nations once the Kingdom has joined the World Trade Organisation (WTO) which will open new markets abroad for the Kingdom's exports.

On the pan-Arab front, Jordan will continue to concentrate its efforts towards strengthening cooperation with other Arab states with the purpose of creating an Arab common market and inter-Arab economic cooperation, Dr. Majali said.

At the same time Jordan will seek a regional cooperation and security system, regional cooperation for combating terrorism, stronger ties with Islamic nations, joint efforts to prevent ethnic, sectarian or religious conflicts and ways to portray Islam as a religion that preaches tolerance and peaceful coexistence, the prime minister said.

Determined to achieve the goals of the Great Arab Revolt that form the basis of Jordan's pan-Arab policies, the Kingdom will

continue to pursue efforts towards unified Arab position, the prime minister said.

In this domain, the prime minister cited Jordan's active participation in the creation of the Arab League, in achieving unity between the two banks of the Jordan River after the creation of the state of Israel and the Kingdom's subsequent attempts at creating the Arab fertile crescent union and the merger with Iraq in 1958 as examples of Jordan's pan-Arab endeavours to unify Arab ranks.

Dr. Majali reviewed developments and events in the region since 1965 including the Kingdom's stand during the 1967 war and its regional and international efforts aimed at the implementation of U.N. Security Council resolutions on Palestine and the Gulf war, pointing out His Majesty King Hussein's relentless efforts to contain inter-Arab differences, and pursuing the peace process to secure the return of Arab

lands and rights.

Stressing that Jordan being a country with meagre resources and having taken the brunt of the consequences of developments in Palestine, he said the country had consequently to rely on external aid to carry out its development projects.

He pledged his government's continued efforts to remove obstacles in the path of the peace process, to back the Palestinians in their efforts to regain their rights and lands, to pursue close ties with the European Union (EU) in implementation of a partnership accord with Europe, to enhance the democratic process and political pluralism and respect for human rights in Jordan, give wider powers to the private sector to ensure economic progress, address the bloated and inefficient sectors of the public administration system, fight corruption and intensify efforts to attract foreign and Arab investment in the Kingdom.

Jordanian, Israeli experts propose 'future security architecture' for Mideast

By George H. Hishmeh
U.S. Information Agency

WASHINGTON — In yet another collaboration between an Arab and an Israeli scholar, a new vision for Middle East security has been advanced by two well-respected strategic analysts: the first, a science advisor to King Hussein and the second, an Israeli arms control expert at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government.

At a luncheon at the Middle East Institute (MEI) on May 8, Abdullah Toukan and Shai Feldman underlined the need for thinking "differently" about the region's security and their feeling, as expressed in their book, that "the problems entailed in bridging the remaining gaps are not insurmountable."

Their just-released book is titled: "Bridging the Gap: A Future Security Architecture for the Middle East." It is the first in a series of conflict prevention sponsored by the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict.

The gist of their joint effort is a five-point programme to overcome what they call the gap in the "threat perceptions and security concerns" between the Arab states and Israel. Regardless of whether these are justified or not, they write, "These threat perceptions were deeply held by Arabs and Israelis and had important behavioural consequences — first and foremost in defence doctrine and security policies."

Although they admit that they have used "very broad strokes" in portraying the Arab and Israeli threat perceptions, these behavioural consequences and the extent to which they might be affected by the ongoing dramatic changes in the Middle East are the central focus of their study.

The two experts underline the fact that the Middle East, which accounts for five per cent of the world's population and has about 60 per cent of the world's proven crude oil reserves, is among the most heavily armed regions of the world. Over 30 per cent of the world's arms exports end up in this turbulent region.

The volatility of the region, they point out, is further compounded by the fact that it suffers a chronic shortage of water, and has "one of the world's largest

refugee problems," with an average annual population growth of three per cent and, as a result, a growing young population seeking employment at a rate much higher than the region's economies can provide.

Moreover, they note, there is international concern about "increasing extremism by both Islamic and Jewish activists, leading at times to terrorism."

Their five-step programme for a future security architecture for the Middle East entails:

1. Returning from adopting security policies that diminish the security of neighbours. This would mean "greater awareness" by countries of the Middle East of what the authors saw as a "security dilemma," namely a neighbour's diminished security rarely translates to gains in a country's own wellbeing. Rather the pursuit of policies should be aimed at augmenting a country's security without diminishing the neighbours' self-confidence.

2. Enhancing the process launched by the Middle East Arms Control and Region Security (ACRS) working group of the multilateral Middle East peace negotiations which were launched in Moscow in January 1992. The authors advocate the establishment "without delay" of the Regional Security Centre agreed upon at these talks, which are at present stalled after Israel commenced construction in March on its new Jewish settlement in Arab east Jerusalem.

3. Expanding the Middle East Track-II talks which in their opinion provide "important opportunities for informal exchanges among scholars and other non-officials in the region, allowing the parties to air their perceptions and concerns in an uncommitted fashion."

It was actually at these informal get-togethers at various international settings that Dr. Toukan and Mr. Feldman cemented their relationship and agreed to put their thoughts in writing. Another joint effort between an Arab and an Israeli was undertaken by Sari Nusseibeh and Mark Heller when they collaborated on "No Trumpets No Drums: A Two-State Settlement for the Israel-Palestine Conflict."

4. Establishing a Middle East Cooperative Security

Framework (MECSF) to enhance the security of the region's states through military and non-military means.

It is their view that this proposed framework would gradually replace the ACRS process and would enjoy "a high profile, thus illustrating that the region's states have moved from a narrow pursuit of national security to a serious effort to enhance regional security."

MECSF would be managed by the states in the region rather than the two co-sponsors of the peace process, the United States and Russia, a development that would demonstrate that the Middle East peace process has matured.

5. Ensuring the continued engagement of the United States in the Middle East. They argue that the United States should continue to enhance the region's security "by facilitating the peaceful resolution of disputes, by helping deter aggression and extremism, by encouraging economic development, democratisation and human rights, and by strengthening moderate government in the region."

The authors' formula they acknowledged hinges on "further breakthroughs" including Syrian-Israeli and Lebanese-Israeli accords as well as successful "final status" negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. At the outset of their remarks at MEI, Dr. Toukan stressed in cart-and-horse fashion, that their approach is primarily dependent on the successful conclusion of the bilateral talks, especially on the Palestinian-Israeli track.

In the concluding chapter of their book, the authors emphasised: "It would be unrealistic to expect the region's states to complete such a dramatic mental transformation prior to the achievement of comprehensive peace."

More importantly, the issue of Israel's reported possession of nuclear weapons and its refusal to sign the nuclear non-proliferation treaty and in turn, Israeli concern about the anti-Israeli stance of the Tehran regime and its alleged attempt at acquiring nuclear capability, poses a serious obstacle to any regional security arrangement, in the opinion of several participants at the discussion.

Newspapers report foiled plot against Pope during Beirut visit

BEIRUT (AP) — A terrorist group planned to assassinate Pope John Paul II with rockets during his visit to Lebanon last weekend, two Lebanese newspapers reported Tuesday.

The leading daily Al Nahar and the rightist Ad Diyar attributed the report to unidentified "official sources," but said it had come from the Italian branch of Interpol, the international police. The reports gave no details on how the alleged plot was foiled.

Lebanese security officials confirmed they received an Interpol report on a possible attack, but added the report did not say the assault was imminent. The officials, who spoke under customary rules of anonymity, stressed the Pope was never in danger because of the extensive security surrounding his visit. Rockets that the would-be attackers hoped to smuggle into Lebanon never arrived in the country, the officials said.

The Pope came to Beirut Saturday and for 32 hours kept a hectic schedule of meetings and ceremonies. Sunday, he celebrated an open-air mass in downtown Beirut attended by a crowd estimated at 500,000 people.

The authorities deployed some 20,000 police, soldiers and other security personnel, along with tanks and helicopters, to guard the pontiff.

The attackers had acquired 23 Chinese-made rockets from Chinese gangsters and hoped to use shoulder-fired, anti-aircraft rockets against the Pope's plane or helicopters he used in Lebanon, the dailies said. They said the Italians learned of the purported plot from Canadian Interpol, which identified the would-be attackers as members of a previously unheard of group calling itself "Jaish Allah," or God's army.

The group was said to be made up of Palestinian extremists operating abroad but with an "active branch" in Lebanon. Subsequent information about the plot said it could involve the Palestinian radical groups Hamas or Jihad.

In a fax received by the Associated Press in Beirut, Hamas denied it was involved in a plot on the pontiff's life and said such charges were "a pure slander," the fax was dated Tuesday and said it came from Palestine.



ARAB POET RECEIVES FRENCH AWARD: Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish was handed on Tuesday the prestigious French Award of Arts and Letters during a ceremony held at the Bastille Opera House marking the opening of a conference of Palestinian literature in France. Over the years of Palestinian struggle, Mr. Darwish's poetry became the symbol of Palestinian and Arab nationalism; recited and sung by popular artists all over the Arab World (AFP file photo)

Peres refuses to retire action; Labour Party splits in choice

Peres, Barak, Beilin look for next premier's position

TEL AVIV (AP) — Shimon Peres does not want to retire, and his demand to retain a key position in the opposition Labour Party sparked an acrimonious showdown Tuesday at a party conference.

Mr. Peres is party chairman until June when a new leader will be chosen — most likely the popular former armed forces Chief of Staff Ehud Barak who is seen as the Labour contender with the best chance to defeat Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in a future election.

Mr. Peres, who as Labour leader lost four elections and tied one, said he would not run for prime minister in the next election.

At issue Tuesday was a proposal to make Mr. Peres the president of the Labour Party, a position that would be exclusively created for the former prime minister and Nobel Peace Prize laureate to ease his way into retirement after a public career of four decades.

Mr. Barak wants to keep the party presidency cere-

monial, fearing that Mr. Peres would otherwise use the position to challenge the party's new leadership. But Peres, the last active politician among Israel's founding fathers, has said he will not consider a role bereft of all authority.

"I am not interested in being a figurehead president," Mr. Peres told reporters. "What am I, crazy?"

Israeli analysts said that Yossi Beilin, who is also seeking the party leadership, will likely win more votes as a result of the showdown between Mr. Barak and Mr. Peres.

"Who is coming? The next prime minister," supporters chanted as Mr. Beilin entered the party conference in Tel Aviv.

Israel Radio initially reported that the cheers were meant for Mr. Barak. Mr. Barak said granting any authority to a party president would weaken Labour.

"We need to make clear that our main problem is to be victorious over

Netanyahu and for that we need a party that will prepare as a group ... and not a few different decision-making centres," Mr. Barak told reporters.

At the party conference, followers of Mr. Barak and Mr. Peres argued bitterly over whether the issue should come up for a vote Tuesday.

Some accused Mr. Peres of trying to hang onto power after his time and hurting the party. Mr. Peres' bid for the party presidency was supported by several party doves who felt it was a way of keeping in check the more hawkish Mr. Barak.

"There is a group around Peres that has a clear interest in creating anarchy in the party. It is impossible to have two party leaders," said former Finance Minister Avraham Shohat, a Barak ally.

The Peres-Barak confrontation dredged up memories of the bitter rivalry between Mr. Peres and Yitzhak Rabin, resolved only in the few years before Rabin's 1995 assassination.

Possible independence for southern Sudan raises hopes of other regions

KHARTOUM (AP) — Some members of parliament say a peace agreement offering rebels from southern Sudan a chance for an independent state should be extended to give similar rights to ethnic groups in the country's west.

The proposal was raised as parliament debated the implications of the treaty signed in April with six southern rebel groups. The treaty allows the southerners to vote on remaining part of Sudan or creating a new state after an interim peace of four years. Amin Banani Nio, a lawmaker from Darfur state in the west, was quoted by newspapers as telling fellow legislators that a new constitution under study should "give all Sudanese ethnic groups the right to self-determination, not only the southerners."

Earlier, legislators from western Sudan had criticised supplements to the treaty which outline the possible borders of a southern state. They fear the boundaries would cut off western cattle raisers from taking their animals south during the dry season. Mr. Nio warned Monday in parliament of the "negative consequences on adjacent tribes when we come to the practical implementation of the agreement."

The outspoken Mr. Nio, known for his criticism of corruption in government, argued that the peace treaty set a precedent of "political diversity."

Another legislator, Alkhair Alfhaim from Kordufan province in the west, was quoted by the Daily Alwan as saying a state should be created for the cattle-raising tribes of western Sudan.

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Another legislator, Alkhair Alfhaim from Kordufan province in the west, was quoted by the Daily Alwan as saying a state should be created for the cattle-raising tribes of western Sudan.

"Historic injustice has

befallen these tribes and they have the right to chose separation," the daily quoted him as telling parliament.

But a representative of the armed forces in parliament, Colonel Younis Mahmoud, was quoted in reports on the parliamentary debate as warning ethnic groups other than southerners not to challenge the rule of the central government in Khartoum. He said ethnic, religious and geographical differences opened the way for self-determination to the south, but that others did not fall in the same category. The southerners, mostly Christians and animists and of more African than Arab stock, have been fighting since 1983 against the government dominated by Arabs and Muslims. More than 1.3 million people have died in the fighting or ensuing famines.

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Mafioso on run sets cat as condition for return

SICILY (R) — A suspected mafioso sentenced to eight years in jail and on the run for three has offered to turn himself in — as long as his cat can come too. Claudio Canastra, a lawyer for 36-year-old suspected mob member Mario Milano, told news agency ANSA Monday that police officials from Sicily were already in contact with his client to discuss his return from hiding in Canada. Canastra said that apart from not wanting to be separated from his Persian cat Mino, Milano also wanted to be jailed in the western Sicilian port of Agrigento and to be able to talk to his family as soon as he returned home. He had no more details.

Sicily theatre reopens after 23 years of repairs

PALERMO (R) — Palermo's Teatro Massimo, the third-largest opera house in Europe, reopened partially Monday after a 23-year closure which critics say was prolonged by bungled restorations, corruption and bureaucracy. The 19th-century theatre, the largest opera house on the continent after Vienna and Paris, reopened to the sounds of the Va Pensiero Aria from Verdi's Nabucco. In its long history, the theatre, opened in 1897, hosted such opera stars as Enrico Caruso, Luciano Pavarotti and Maria Callas. Responsibility for the repairs was transferred back and forth several times between the central, regional and local governments. Millions of dollars were spent on repairs that yielded minimal results. Only part of the theatre was reopened. The remainder still needs to undergo restoration.

Plane door began opening in flight

LONDON (R) — The door of a British Airways PLC plane with more than 300 passengers on board began to open while it flew at heights of up to 21,000 feet, a report published Monday said. The report by Britain's air accident investigations branch said the Boeing 747's cabin crew saw the door handle rotate towards the open position and heard the sound of rushing air shortly after take-off from London's Gatwick Airport last November. The crew of the plane, which was bound for Nairobi, secured the door using looped-together seat belts while the pilot dumped 46 tonnes of fuel from the plane before returning to Gatwick, the report said. Engineers at Gatwick had advised the crew by radio to leave the handle and see how far it would open, but they disregarded this report said. The release blamed the incident on a replacement part in the door which had not been drilled correctly, but said new procedures have been introduced to prevent it from happening again.

New York City garden dedicated to Katharine Hepburn

NEW YORK (R) — A New York City garden was dedicated to film great Katharine Hepburn Monday, her 90th birthday. "Miss H," as director Anthony Harvey called her, remained at her home in Fenwick, Connecticut, overlooking the Long Island sound, planners of the event said. Harvey said Hepburn was doing well when he spoke to her over the weekend. Hepburn lived in the Turtle Bay neighbourhood of New York City, where the garden is located, for six decades. The Katharine Hepburn Garden is part of the larger Dag Hammarskjold Plaza at the front of the United Nations. Hepburn won a record four academy awards for best actress, and her sophisticated, emancipated style has inspired generations of women.